

GATES OF MORDOR™

#8105

A READY-TO-RUN FANTASY ROLE PLAYING ADVENTURE MODULE FROM
J.R.R. TOLKIEN'S MIDDLE-EARTH®

Compatible with
MERP™
Rolemaster™



Three low-to-mid level adventures based on THE LORD OF THE RINGS™ and THE HOBBIT™. Each adventure stands on its own and can be set up in minutes. Produced and distributed by IRON CROWN ENTERPRISES, INC.

GATES OF MORDOR

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With Thanks To: Rose Smith, Debbie Hart, Joan & Derrick, Carole
Atkin and Pete Fenlon

Dedicated to Tim, Harty and Jim.

Typesetting: Sylvie and Co. at The Design Group, Lynchburg,
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Stock # 8105 ISBN 0-915795-81-7

First U.S. Edition: May, 1987

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1.0 GUIDELINES

The *Middle-earth Ready-to-Run* Series is designed for Gamemasters who want adventures which can be set up in a few minutes and played in a few hours. The adventures require little or no preparation.

Gates of Mordor has four parts. Section 1.0 deals with guidelines regarding the use of the module. Section 2.0 provides pregenerated characters for the players (which can be used as non player characters if so desired).

The third part contains Sections 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0, the adventures. Each adventure stands on its own, although a common theme unites the stories. They can be set anywhere in Middle-earth where the story seems appropriate.

The fourth part of the module (Section 7.0) contains the encounter charts, and is located at the back of the book, permitting easy reference.

1.1 HANDLING PLAY

Each adventure is geared for a different difficulty level. The one found in Section 3.0 is challenging for 1st or 2nd level characters, or inexperienced players. Section 4.0's adventure is aimed at 2nd or 3rd level adventurers, while the adventure in Section 5.0 is designed for 4th or 5th level characters.

The adventures are divided into five standard parts: (1) the tale, which describes the setting and covers the background and plot; (2) the NPCs, a person-by-person description of the prominent non player characters, including their stats; (3) the layout, a level-by-level, room-by-room description of the adventure site, complete with numbered diagrams, floorplans, and illustrations; (4) the task, a discussion of how to start the adventure, along with the aids, clues, obstacles, and rewards awaiting the adventurers; and (5) encounters, which cover typical or probable meetings between the adventurers and the NPCs.

The GM should skim each section of an adventure before beginning play. Then he can have the players pick pre-designed characters from those provided in Section 2.0, or he can permit the players to design their own PCs. (Of course, the GM can assign PCs.)

Once play ensues, the GM should refer to the Encounter Chart in Section 7.1, at the back of the module. It covers the probability of encounters for every spot in each adventure.

1.2 ADAPTING THE MODULE TO YOUR GAME

Like the rest of the series, this module is designed for use with the *Middle-earth Role Playing* game (*MERP*) or the more advanced *Rolemaster* (*RM*) system, but is adaptable to most other major FRP games. Statistics are expressed on a closed or open-ended scale, using a 1-100 base and percentile dice (D100). No other dice are required.

1.21 CONVERSION CHART

If you play something other than *MERP* or *Rolemaster* and you do not use a percentile system, use the following chart to convert 1-100 numbers to figures suited to your game.

1-100 Stat	D100 Bonus	D20 Bonus	3-18 Stat	2-12 Stat
102+	+35	+7	20+	17+
101	+30	+6	19	15-16
100	+25	+5	18	13-14
98-99	+20	+4	17	12
95-97	+15	+3	16	—
90-94	+10	+2	15	11
85-89	+5	+1	14	10
75-84	+5	+1	13	9
60-74	0	0	12	8
40-59	0	0	10-11	7
25-39	0	0	9	6
15-24	-5	-1	8	5
10-14	-5	-1	7	4
5-9	-10	-2	6	3
3-4	-15	-3	5	—
2	-20	-4	4	2
1	-25	-4	4	2'

1.22 CONVERTING HITS AND BONUSES

Bonuses: When converting percentile values to a 1-20 system a simple rule is: for every +5 on a D100 scale you get a +1 on a D20.

Hits: The concussion hit numbers found in this module only represent general pain and system shock. They cover bruises and small cuts rather than wounds. Critical strike damage is used to describe serious wounds and fatal blows. The hit figures shown here are less important than those used in game systems where death occurs as a result of exceeding one's available hits. Should you use a game system that employs no specific critical strike results (e.g., *TSR Inc's Dungeons and Dragons™*), simply double the number of hits your characters take or halve the hit values found in this module.

2.0 PLAYER CHARACTERS

The following chart provides a sampling of pregenerated player characters of varying profession and levels. Statistics are given for both *MERP* and *Rolemaster*. The GM may wish to assign his players a character or allow them to select from the list. Of course, the GM can utilize the unused PCs as non player characters. After all, the players may design their own characters or employ characters already in use.

The GM should remember, however, that regardless of how the players acquire their characters, each adventure is geared for a different difficulty level (see 1.1). We suggest PCs tough enough to meet the challenge.

KEY

Codes: See the NPC stats on page 5 for an explanation of the basic codes. The following is a list of other codes and abbreviations which might be ambiguous.

Power Points: The number (if any) given in parentheses indicates the possession of a "bonus spell item" and its bonus (see *MERP* Section 4.56).

Skill Bonuses: NA, SL, RL, CH = Maneuver and Movement in No Armor, Soft Leather, Rigid Leather, and Chain; IHE, IHC, 2H, THR, MSL, PA = Offensive Bonuses for I-H Edged, I-H Concussion, 2-Handed, Thrown, Missile, and Pole-arms; S/H = Stalk/Hide; Lock = Pick Lock; Trap = Disarm Trap; Rune = Read Runes; Item = Use Items; Dir = Directed Spells; Perc = Perception; S SK = Secondary Skills; Lang = Language; List = Spell List.

Secondary Skills: Each secondary skill is abbreviated by giving the beginning letter, of the skill (see *MERP* Section 2.33). The bonus for that skill is given following the abbreviation.

Languages: Languages are abbreviated by using their first three letters (see *MERP*, ST-I, p. 19); exception: BS = Black Speech and Bet = Silban (Bethetur). The rank for each language is given following the abbreviation.

Spell Lists: Spell lists are abbreviated by using the first few letters in each word of the spell list name; for example, "Snd/Lt Ways" refers to the "Sound/Light Ways" spell list.



NAME	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8	PC9	PC10	PC11	PC12	PC13	PC14	PC15	PC16	PC17	PC18
Race	Urb.Man	Dwarf	Rur.Man	Rur.Man	Dnadan	Hobbit	Half-elf	Dnadan	Dnadan	Dnadan	Urb.Man	Sinda	Dundend.	Silvan Elf	Woodman	Noldo	Easterting	Urb.Man
Ht/Whit	5'11"/170	4'8"/130	6'2"/190	5'8"/145	6'4"/208	3'2"/80	6'0"/140	5'11"/155	6'3"/220	6'1"/190	5'8"/125	6'4"/150	5'9"/180	5'11"/109	6'0"/205	6'8"/185	5'8"/220	5'6"/170
Hair	Nubrown	Black	Dun	Fair	Raven	Tawny	Dull Brown	Shaven	Greying	Brunette	Bay	Golden	Plaited	Honey	Blond	Ebony	Pied	Aburn
Eyes	Dk.Brown	Jet	Lt.Brown	Dk.Blue	Hazel	Lt.Blue	Grey	Black	Lt.Blue	Orange	Blue-green	Cyan	White	Green	Almond	Lilac	Dk.Brown	Hazel
Prof	Warrior	Warrior	Warrior	scout	scout	scout	Ranger	Ranger	Ranger	Animist	Animist	Animist	Animist	Animist	Animist	Animist	Mage	Mage
Level	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5	1	3	5
Hits	25	82	80	22	57	54	46	65	71	46	35	72	25	27	53	34	79	39
AT (DB)	RL(45)	CH(30)	CH(35)	No(10)	CH(3155)	No(60)	SL(30)	SL(15)	CH(5)	SL(0)	RL(10)	CH(10)	No(0)	No(10)	No(20)	No(15)	No(20)	No(3)
Shield	Y25	Y35	Y25	Y25	Y25	Y15	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Power Points	111	3	0	11	6	10	0	0	0	2	6	18	1	6	15	11(+2)	18	5(+3)
Base Spells OB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strength	90	100	90	77	78	77	86	90	95	43	46	97	70	43	78	57	100	85
Agility	96	43	77	90	90	101	36	95	33	64	92	51	64	38	15	63	90	77
Constitution	56	63	49	52	62	44	90	90	90	37	75	40	42	48	86	43	77	85
Intelligence	17	64	55	65	98	60	63	51	41	66	82	52	92	92	101	90	100	90
Intuition	30	85	61	85	60	91	62	45	85	98	91	90	46	90	58	39	63	84
Presence	62	47	71	32	65	98	72	47	86	73	72	92	90	45	90	91	32	86
Appearance	78	27	84	87	66	57	45	86	34	88	72	103	95	45	99	120	18	69
NA Move Mver	20	5	15	30	30	55	10	30	10	5	15	15	10	25	10	20	15	10
SL Move Mver	x	x	-5	0	-5	5	0	25	x	0	x	x	x	0	5	x	x	x
RL Move Mver	0	x	x	x	-5	x	x	x	x	x	-5	5	-10	x	x	x	x	x
Ch Move Mver	x	20	x	x	-5	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
1-h Edged OB	43ha	14ha	82bs	2lbs	53bs	15/25ss	OB	22bs	3isc	60da	20ss	45da	20da	23bs	45ha	5da	35sc	20da
1-h Con OB	x	84wh	5ma	x	18qs	x	17th	x	80ba	x	x	x	11ma	x	x	x	x	x
2-h OB	23fl	64wh	45th	x	x	x	x	x	x	10qs	25kn	65fl	16sp	x	x	x	x	x
Thrown OB	x	9ha	70lasso	16sp	33xb	85sb	51bwp	x	50lb	5xb	155b	20lb	41thsp	x	15ha	20cp	15ha	20cp
Missile OB	28cp	19xb	35lb	36lb	18sp	85sb	22lb	x	40sp	20thsp	155b	20lb	41thsp	x	40lb	20cp	20xb	10xb
Polearm OB	x	14hb	35sp	16sp	33xb	85sb	22lb	x	50lb	5xb	155b	20lb	41thsp	x	40lb	20cp	20xb	10xb
Climb	21	28	35	16	28	104	13	54	20	x	18	20	56	33	70	x	x	x
Ride	6	x	35	11	8	104	13	54	20	x	18	20	56	33	70	x	x	x
Swim	21	x	15	16	18	60	13	50	20	6	18	25	16	23	15	10	40	30
Track	x	18	10	6	5	25	18	49	45	x	x	20	16	23	45	20	40	x
Ambush	x	x	x	5	5	25	5	25	45	x	10	60	26	68	10	x	x	x
Stalk/Hide	5	10	30	27	41	75	40	36	45	10	20	60	26	68	50	40	x	x
Pick Lock	15	5	x	7	46	40	x	x	x	x	x	x	16	28	40	x	x	x
Disarm Trap	x	20	x	x	21	45	x	15	10	x	x	15	6	28	25	x	x	x
Read Runes	10	x	x	x	25	45	5	x	5	6	13	15	16	28	60	32	46	50
Use Item	x	x	x	x	5	x	x	x	15	31	33	45	6	33	30	17	21	45
Disp OB	5	x	x	x	5	x	x	x	x	7	21	-5	6	x	x	23	34	45
Perception	10	25	35	18	24	65	22	26	40	26	33	50	11	48	30	30	10	35
2ndy Skill	Trade30	Caving30	Forge25	Tumble45	Trick30	Act40	Running40	Poison40	Train 35	Workshop45	PS.40	Aid 50	Song55	Dnce45	Flkt55	Que 5	Log 5	Courtesy3C
2ndy Skill	Wes 5	Khz 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Wes 5	Tumble90	Bet 5	Pik 5	Animal 35	Wes 5	Wes 5	Dun 5	Wes 4	Bet 5	Nah 5	Que 5	Log 5	Evaluate3i
Language	Sin 3	Wes 5	Sin 2	Ork 3	Adi 4	Sin 2	Wes 5	Wes 3	Adi 4	Adi 5	Ork 4	Wes 5	Wes 4	Wes 5	Sin 4	Sin 5	Wes 4	Wes 5
Language	Adi 2	Adi 2	Adi 2	Sin 2	Sin 4	Bet 1	Sin 3	Dun 2	Sin 4	Que 5	Ork 4	Bet 4	Sin 3	Wes 5	Adi 3	Adi 5	Sin 3	Que 5
Language	Dun 1	Dun 1	Dun 1	Wai 3	Wai 3	Atl 1	Nah 2	Dun 2	Har 2	Sin 4	Craban 2	Wai 4	Nah 4	Que 3	Nah 4	Asd/Sag 3	Log 2	Log 5
Language	One 2	One 2	One 2	Atl 2	Atl 2	Atl 2	Atl 2	Atl 2	Var 2	Pik 1	Craban 2	Que 3	Nah 4	Que 3	Nah 4	Asd/Sag 3	Log 2	Log 5
Language	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.	Det.Mast.
Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List
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Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List	Spell List

SPECIAL ABILITIES, MAGIC ITEMS & SPECIAL POSSESSIONS

PC1: Lightning Reactions, +10 short axe.
PC2: Shield +10 DB & RR; Bone Ring with Curse Tales & Neutralise Curse 1/day; each
PC3: +10 RR Poison; Rope +10 MM and OB (as lasso); Set of Arm/Leg Greaves +3 DB and no penalties; Cap with Lore 3/day
PC4: Cloak +10 Hide and MM if no armour worn; SOap in coins
PC5: Gloves +10 Trickery, +5 Pick Lock/Disarm Trap; Wristband +20 DB against missiles.
PC6: Small buckle?; Short Sword +10 OB or DB; Ring +5 RRs; 7 Ivory Arrows +5 OB and Slaying Lesser Orcs
PC7: Observant; Ruby Pendant +1 spell adder
PC8: Adapt at MMs; Leather Belt with Detect Essence 4/day; Stone of Waiting Awareness 1/day; selection of non-fatal poisons
PC9: Lightning Reactions; Pet mastiff (w/3 dog) +25; Ring of Blood Transfusion 1/day; Helm x2 PP; 3 doses Anclas 1,800gp

PC10: Infatuation; Cape of Resist Cold 3/day
PC11: Pet Crabran +25; Bracelet of Invisibility 1/day; Dagger +10 OB and Summon Dark Spirit 1/week
PC12: Dragonskin Armour (as Chain); Holy Flail +10 and x3 PP
PC13: Gold Torc +5 Base Spells and RRs against EssCmn
PC14: Cloak +10 MM and Stalk/Hide; Lyre x2 PP and +10 Song Spells
PC15: +10 RR Heat/Cold; Embroidered Waistcoat +15 DB; Headband of Intuitions 1/3/day; Rune Paper with Breeze Call; Shock Bolt
PC16: Two hand-held mithril discs (+2 spells)
PC17: Resistant to Pain; Ustrey +10 OB; Lesser Igana +10 DB & Base Spells and x2 PP
PC18: Coral Sceptre (+2 spells); Onyx-handled Dagger (+1 spell & +5 OB); Ebon Gauntlet of Cancel Spell 2/day; 1,800gp

All stats given on the table include bonuses for the abilities and items given above.

Note: Power Points given thus [11] means cannot be used currently

3.0 ORCS OF THE GREEN CLAW

Between Sauron's ancient realm of Mordor and the great empire of Gondor, home of the Faithful from Numenor, lies fair Ithilien. This strip of woodland and gardenlands stretches like a noble's trencher spread with Nature's bounty between the ribbon of blue Anduin and the jagged spires of the Ephel Duath.

Ithilien is divided by the Ithilduin, a swift cold river rising on Mordor's boundary and rushing down past Minas Ithil to Osgiliath. Until recently Osgiliath was capital of an empire encompassing lands from the shores of Anfalas to the Mountains of Rhin, a thousand miles across. North Ithilien, an area once known as the "garden of Gondor", now stands peaceful and largely untroubled by the hand of Man. Gondor's settlements are limited to the city of Minas Ithil, to farmsteads in the Eryn Ammen, and fishing and craft villages along the banks of Anduin. North Ithilien's majestic forests, green glades and heathered uplands are abandoned since the Plague swept through the countryside, devastating every village, hamlet, farm and cottage. The survivors, ever looking over their shoulders at the Mountains of Shadow, mostly fled to more secure holds.

Here, in the wide, rambling woodlands of North Ithilien, those few hardy folk who love this land more than their safety, are soon to suffer another evil plague unless the brave adventurers can save them. But this plague comes not from the bites of tiny insects: it walks on two legs — and on four. A dark mind is at work, behind The Orcs of the Green Claw.

3.1 TRAIL OF THE WINE BANDITS

In the northern reaches of the *Ephel Duath* (S. "Mountains of Shadow") a stream is born from the snow on the high slopes. Its waters are cold, and impelled by their height rush down over cataracts and through a steep-sided valley to the foothills of Ithilien. This is *Sir Ascarwing* (S. "Rushing-Spray River"). It flows down through North Ithilien gathering tributaries and winding through the woods and forests. The stepped and shelving landscape produces numerous waterfalls and rapids. At one point the river disappears altogether through a cleft in its rocky bed to reemerge in a torrential spout from an underground cave and channel. This famous beauty-spot, where a walkway runs behind the falling sheet of water, known as *Mirainlin Araneth* (S. "Beautiful Jewels of Sunset") or *Henneth Annfin* (S. "Window on the West"), attracted many visitors at one time. At the end of the day, when the sun sinks behind the Ered Nimrais in the west, its red-golden light shines through the clear shoots of water forming an iridescent spectacle — a wonder of glistening, sparkling, scattered light.

Further upstream from this abandoned miracle of nature, on the lower slopes of the *Tyrn Thurion* (S. "Cypress Hills"), lies the Winehouse, more formally known as Mar Maliarnin. Its estates cover south and west facing hill sides, where vines and fruit trees grow in profusion under the tender care of Hir Maliarnin. Hir is Master of the estate and a well known vintner from a long line of vintners. His family and their servants live in a splendid villa below their vineyards, overlooking the vale of a small stream, *Nan Zurenen* (S. "Vale of the Berrywater"). Here they make wines and ales of great variety and superb quality.

Elsewhere in Gondor there are many taverns, inns and wineshops who stock the Winehouse's produce. There are bottles of classic 1586 Culaisson, bulbous stone amphorae brimming with Mircalen liquor, stout barrels of Sage Ale, casks of thick and heady GinnCs, stoppered glass flagons redly shining with fiery Culunor. Most widely available are the red and white wines simply known as Maliarnin.

FIRICHAL



The red is rich and full-bodied, a favorite of nobles and commanders in many areas, and in good years commanding a very high price. The white is soft and light with a tang of wild scents, well loved by gentlewomen and served at many a marriage feast.

But Firichal, owner of a drinking house and a wine merchant, is worried. His bi-annual supplies from Mar Maliarnin have not arrived and are now several weeks overdue. Perhaps the rumor of bandits and other evildoers lurking in the shelter of North Ithilien's woods are more substantial than many think? Or perhaps something more serious is wrong in Nan Ascarwing? Firichal's concern over his supplies and the supplier is the player characters' introduction to this adventure. The merchant will offer them a good reward for finding out what has happened to Hir Maliarnin and his wine and ale.

The player characters are also likely to have heard the rumors of bandits in the Taur Ithilien. Some two centuries past, after the struggle and civil war known as the Kin-strife, the returning king Eldacar invited many Northmen to settle in Ithilien, men from his mother's people. Those that came became woodsmen, farmers and fishermen and most grew to love the rolling forestland. However, others grew unhappy with the supercilious nature of the Dunedain and revolted against the stricter rules of the Gondorian Empire, taking to a life of crime and banditry. After the Plague decimated and depopulated the region it was practically abandoned to them. Only occasional forays by patrols of guardsmen from Minas Ithil keep the problem under control. Since the Watch on Mordor was discontinued, who knows what horrors might come creeping from the Black Gate or over the Mountains of Shadow?

What has actually happened is that a group of bandits have taken up residence in caves in the *Gonderyth Duath* (S. "Cliffs of Shadow"). The cliffs rise like a huge tree-topped eyebrow, formed on the fault-line of a broad hogsback hill, Dol Henfin. They face north and west and the grey scar is clearly visible from the Nan Ascarwing for many miles. From their high position they can look down on the North Road which passes between Minas Ithil and Morannon, and on to Dor RhQnen. The bandits are led by Caerlinc, who was at one time a simple farmer. He is far from simple however, and having detected signs of Orcs in the area — something unthinkable just five years ago — has trained his band to mimic Orcs and orkish behavior during their attacks.

The Orcs Caerlinc has seen (and avoided) are Orcs of the Green Claw, also called *Scara-hai* in their own tongue. They are responsible for the delay in the delivery of wine to Firichal and in fact have put an end to hundreds of years of winemaking at Mar Maliarnin. Three *bukras* (Or. "claws") of Scara-hai came in the night to the villa some weeks ago and slaughtered the whole household in their beds. Those that managed to flee were brought down in their nightshirts, hunted through the darkened trees and torn to pieces. None survived to tell the tale — not all were killed immediately, but those taken prisoner have no hope of remission. The Orcs have also attacked a number of other homesteads and forest cottages in isolated places; the only habitation able to stand up to them being the tiny Elven village of Firimas. However, the village is now besieged by the Scara-hai and none of the Elves have yet dared to try an escape.

The Orcs have been commanded to return to Mar Maliarnin and search for a treasure whose existence was revealed by a woman after subjection to odious and indescribable tortures by the Scara-hai chieftain. The two *bukras* sent back to the villa have been told to search "under the water", this being the only clue to the treasure's location gained before the woman mercifully died. However, with two complex bath-houses, a pool shrine, a well and a dammed lake to investigate, the two commanding Shircks are finding the task a difficult and time-consuming one.

3.2 THE NPCS

The people of North Ithilien are a mixture of Dunadan, lesser Dunadan, Northman and rural Men. Most settlements are close by Anduin, for here there are fertile pasturelands and many good spots for fishing. Further east from the great river the land rises and is afforested. Here dwell sturdy woodsmen and their families, some no doubt descended from Beornings and Woodsmen of Mirkwood and Rhovanion. There are also lawless men (and women) who prey on unwary travelers and other helpless folk.

In this section the four bandits of Caerlinc's band are detailed as well as some of the Scara-hai and the leaders of the two *bukras* at Mar Maliarnin.

3.2.1 CAERLINC

Caerlinc is a middle-aged man with a square face and prominent nose. He has black hair and thick eyebrows and stands a good 6'3" tall, a lesser Dunadan with a grudge against the society that kept him in his place as a farmer despite his four years of proven ability in the Royal Army. Caerlinc would often supplement his family's meals with game hunted in the Taur Ithilien. Then the Great Plague came and all his family died, except for his youngest daughter Calamere. Faced with a future alone, something in Caerlinc's spirit rebelled; something cried out against the injustice of his life. At the age of 40, he became a bandit, first joining a large band and then, more recently, breaking away and forming his own. Caerlinc is slightly honorable in his approach to banditry, and will not kill anyone who surrenders.

Caerlinc is also careful about his band's activities. To try and put off any possible search for them, he takes pains to disguise the remains of any attack to look as if Orcs were responsible. He carries a number of orkish knives and other items that they recovered from a raid and drops them at strategic points. They also use arrows and bolts made by Curistel in imitation of orkish ones. To determine that the site of an ambush is **not** an orkish attack, player characters must make an Extremely Hard (-10) Tracking Roll.

Caerlinc is not a ruthless or sly man; he is simply careful. He intends to survive and live his own life now and will always try to deal with a stronger opponent rather than fight him. However, he fights well and has a shield of enchanted boxwood (+10) carved with runes.

Notable Skills: Perception 45, Track 39, Stalk/Hide 35, Hunting 30, Disarm Traps 15. **Languages:** Westron (5), Sindarin (3), Adunaic (2).

CAERLINC



3.2.2 BARDIR

Bardir is a young man originally from the eaves of Mirkwood. His parents followed earlier migrations of their clan southward in search of better lands and weather. Bardir was their only son and came to them late in life; the age gap between them was too big for Bardir to bridge and he soon became bored with their rustic and industrious life. He also resented their servile attitude towards the Dunedain and the way they chastised and remonstrated with him.

Eventually he left their forester's cottage in Taur Ithilien and started wandering, seeking a living in Osgiliath and then further afield, roaming much of "old" Gondor. He became a petty thief in the towns and learned to live rough in the countryside. Bardir has few friends and fewer loves in life: his one great passion is his sword. This he stole from a Wnadan nobleman having been attracted by its intricate design. He calls it *Taihswairus* (Rh: Right-hand Sword); it has a gold hilt and guard studded with minute pearls and there is a tracery of

gold inlaid on the upper half of the blade. Bardir habitually carries it unsheathed and on display and spends much time each day cleaning and caring for it. It is an eket, equivalent to a shortsword, worth 80gp. Bardir is convinced the blade is magical, but it confers no bonus.

Notable Skills: *Stalk/Hide 56, Track 43, Climb 33, Perception 29, Pick Locks 26, Trickery 25, Foraging 25, Swim 23. Languages: Westron (S), Nahaiduk (3), Sindarin (3), Adunaic (2), Dunael (1).*

3.23 MOFF

Moff is little more than a lad and the greenest of the band. However, he has special talents that are apparent to Caerlinc and he is accepted as a full member by all of them. Moff comes from Anorien, his parents hailing from a small village beside the Anduin. Being poor folk, they had little to offer him and since the age of sixteen Moff had been a laborer. He went around with lads his own age, chased girls and drank. It was in a drunken state when he got into a brawl — a not infrequent occurrence — and a guardsman died having his skull staved in with a stool. Moff was arrested in the sergeant's haste to find a culprit. Finding his friends had deserted him, he decided to get himself out of this problem. He overpowered his guard, stole his gear (chainmail and broadsword) and rifled the money box (he still has 22gp left), then calmly unhitched a horse and rode off. Only when he got to the bridge across Anduin at Osgiliath did he stop shaking inside.

Deciding that refuge in Ithilien might not be a bad idea, he crossed the great river and went to Minas Ithil, disguising himself as a wounded soldier discharged from the Army. He could not sustain the pose for long and hearing of the bandits in Taur Ithilien, sought them out.

Notable Skills: *Stalk/Hide 24, Swim 22, Perception 21. Languages: Westron (S), Sindarin (2).*

MOFF



3.24 CURISTEL

CuristC1 is a true Dunadan, tall and stern-featured, with a glaring visage that makes people wary of him rather than protected. His black hair is kept cropped as short as possible and he wears severely cut, dark clothes. He has a strange background. His father was a leader of the Taur division of the Army in South Ithilien, and trained his son in both magical and martial skills. However, he argued frequently with his father and grew to resent all authority. When his father died as one of the first victims of the Plague, he became even more self-centered and aloof from his colleagues. Since he did not get on with his subsequent commanders, he was never promoted and his dislike of authority grew even more.

Two years ago he deserted after a disagreement over the treatment of some prisoners. From them he had learned of the existence of brigands in Northern Ithilien and he determined to start on a career as a bounty hunter, using his skills to bring these outlaws to justice. He rode north and discreetly followed a number of merchants and travelers taking paths where ambushes had been laid previously, eventually being rewarded with the sight of “wild” men leaping from the trees to attack. Rather than going to the victim's aid, Curistel waited and followed the bandits back to their lair — whereupon he was captured by Caerlinc and Bardir. They persuaded him of the joys of banditry and he realized it would indeed be a more satisfying life. CuristC1's main pride is his great yew bow. He presided over every stage of its manufacture and it is perfectly designed for him (+5 for CuristC1, -5 for anyone else). He also makes arrows using the black feathers of crows, like those made by Orcs. His special Camouflage skill is added to his Hide bonus when he has at least 2 minutes to conceal himself (or others) and is in natural surroundings (e.g. forest, garden, long grass).

Notable Skills: *Camouflage 55, Perception 46, Fletching 45, Ride 34, Swim 34, Stalk/Hide 26, Track 24, Disarm Traps 20, Use Items 20. Languages: Westron (5), Sindarin (5), Adunaic (4), Quenya (3), Waildyth (2). Spell Lists: Surface Ways, Moving Ways.*

3.25 GABALLOL & RHUKSKA

Gaballol and Rhukskä are both *Shirfiks* (Or. “Leaper”), commanders of the basic Scara-hai fighting unit known as a *bukra* (Or. “claw”). As a claw has five talons, so the bukra has five Orcs: two warriors, two scouts and a Shiruk who is responsible for getting the other four to follow orders and complete the task handed down by the tribal superiors. The Shiruks have an ability and use special weapons. The latter are clawed maces which also serve as a token of rank among the Scara-hai. This weapon, called an or-bukar, is typically made of bronze with sharpened steel spikes and may be used as a one-handed weapon (like a morning star) or two-handed:

One-handed: Fumble 6, Criticals CR / PU(A), +5 OB

Two-handed: Fumble 6, Criticals CR / PU, +5 OB
(no/leather armor)

The special ability gives the Shiruks their name. They can perform special feats of leaping, a combination of the diving and tumbling skills. The or-bukar is sometimes used as a prop to assist these maneuvers which can be performed during combat to surprise an opponent. Using his leaping skill, a Shiruk can jump up to 15' (or 6' high) without assistance. The or-bukar can be used as a pole to vault even higher. A Shiruk can forego an attack to perform a Hard MM; if successful he has gotten behind his opponent (setting up an Ambush) and with a result of 100+ also gains surprise. The or-bukar can also be used overhead, for example leaping up and using it to swing on branches. The Shiruk could then (with surprise) launch a kick at an opponent! The leaping MM bonus is shown thus on the NPC Chart: &20e.

Notable Skills: *Climb 30, Ambush 25, Stalk/Hide 10. Languages: Orkish/Scarabit (S), Westron (3), Morbeth (2).*

GABALLOL



3.26 A TYPICAL BUKRA

As mentioned above, the Scara-hai fighting unit or bukra has a leader and four others: two warriors and two scouts. The warriors are accoutered with reinforced leather armor, studded with bronze and iron rivets and small plates, and wield wicked war hammers. These hammers have a peen shaped like a wolf's head opposite the beak of the hammer (its business end). They carry a side arm, either a club or a shortsword — as they often hurl the hammer at an opponent as they close — and an iron-banded wooden shield painted with the symbol of the Green Claw. For ease of movement, the scouts wear ordinary (soft) leather armor, and use ball-headed iron maces and shortbows. Each carries a quiver with 18 black-feathered arrows. All members of the bukra (including the ShirOk) wear a wolfskin cloak thrown over their back outside their armor, and also a hardened leather helmet with a wolf's fur band and tail hanging behind.

WARRIORS — *Notable Skills: Occupational Skill 25, Ambush 10/15, Climb 10, Swim 10. Languages: Orkish/Scarabit (4), Westron (3).*

SCOUTS — *Notable Skills: Climb 15/20, Ambush 10/15, Stalk/Hide 5/15, Perception 5/15, Swim 10, Traps 5/10. Languages: Orkish/Scarabit (4), Westron (3), Morbeth (2).*

3.27 THE PUKEL-MAN

The POkel-man is an enchanted stone creature, sited by the track over the ford northeast of the villa. It is more ancient by far than the villa, more ancient than the first Dunadan settlement of the area, dating back to a time when the Druedain lived on both sides of Anduin, a time when Mordor was still a fertile land and the Ephel Duath were young and green and full of life. Now that the Druedain are gone, the Piikel-man's purpose of guarding their ways has also gone. However, their legacy is a hatred of Orcs and other despoilers of beauty; when the Orcs come to this area and start destroying things, it may awaken and start wreaking a terrible vengeance.

Notable Skills: *Track 75, Stalk/Hide 75. Ignores bleeding and temperature criticals; all criticals rolled at -10. Fights with bare (stone!) hands, consider them to be +10 maces. Cannot move more than 1000' from the ford except up or down the stream, in the water. Can be active for up to 5 hours.*

3.3 LAYOUTS OF MAL MALIARNIN AND ONDERYTH DUATH

The action in the adventure takes place on the northern fringes of Taur Ithilien (S. "Ithilien Wood"). This woodland area edged with heath and moor rises quite steeply from the banks of Anduin to the Ephel Duath. The mountains loom up ominously on the eastern flank, a barrier to the withered and barren land of Mordor.

The Wood can appear rather dark and mistrustful itself from a distance, particularly the northernmost stretches, where sombre trees such as larches, cypresses, holly and box make up the bulk of the forest. The roots of the mountains are shadowed and black. The heathlands are tumbled and uneven, with outcroppings of rock, all overgrown with ling, broom, heather and cornel with its red berries and dull flowers. The air is fresh and fragrant with the wonderful scent of heather and the brose or sap of small pine trees that grow in clumps and stands dotted over the landscape.

All the land down between the river and the mountains is folded and riven by valleys, with raised hills and hogsbacks swelling upwards. The broken canopy of green is rolled and tossed like a stormy sea, the hilltop copses of beech standing out with their lighter leaves like spume on the waves' crests. In the clayey hollows there is boggy ground and grassy glades ringed by oaks, many ancient and of tremendous girth.

Ploughing north through the forest along the mountains' feet is the North Road. Coming from the Crossroads close by Minas Ithil, it is a well-made road that has already stood for centuries, made from well-set paving slabs settled in gravel dredged from the many streams that it crosses. There are wayside pillars at regular intervals marking the passing of each mile; these are weathered and worn but their inscriptions and decoration are still just visible. Where a hill must be skirted, the road usually cuts through at least some of the slope leaving steeply edged banks covered with bracken, heather and small trees such as silver birch. Where there is a stream or watercourse to cross, the road leaps over a wide, shapely arch of sturdy and enduring masonry. All these stone features bear the moon-symbol of Ithilien, often laced with greenery; leaves, vines and fruits were popular with the stonecutters and sculptors who worked on the road in the first centuries of the Third Age.

One of the most striking features along the road is *Andiant* (S. "Long Bridge"), a stone viaduct some thousand yards long and just over a hundred feet high at the mid-point. Its great piers of stone rise from the floor of the Nan Ascarwing amid ferns and bullrushes, mossy columns of perfectly jointed masonry. The bridge itself is quite safe and sound, but unwary travellers are known to have come to grief during the occasional violent winds and storms which sweep through the area. The wall at the side is little more than a ledge one yard high. On the bridge, the road narrows to seven yards wide.

On the northern edge of the Wood are the Cypress Hills (S. “Tyrn Tharnion”), the last prominent features before the blasted expanses of the Dagorlad northwest of Mordor’s Black Gate. These rounded uplands are thick with tharnion (cypresses), thonion (pines) and cuewhnion (cedars). These and other resinous trees, together with sweet-smelling herbs and shrubs in broad glades and dells where springs issue and brooks gather, lend an enchanted feeling to the hills, a feeling of peace and tranquility unexpected in a place so close to Sauron’s realm of old. On the southern knees of the Hills lie the vineyards of Mar Maliarnin.

South of the Cypress Hills is the valley of Sir Ascarwing, the major water draining the area. Many streams and brooks feed the river, from the Mountains of Shadow, the Cypress Hills, the *Emyn Fuin* (S. “Hills of Gloom”). The river is a rushing torrent most of the year, late summer being the only time when the plentiful evening and morning rains are lessened. The valley is a riot of life, a splendid celebration of the rich diversity of woodland plants created by Yavanna and her Maiar assistants. All the ground is mantled with a tapestry of colors; plants of every shape and size and scent, creeping and erect, broad-leaved bay and dark olive, thorny juniper and slender, needled larches.

Beside the river are numerous pools and hollows bemossed and deep with spongy worts and sphagnum. In the pools float lilies and water violets shadowed by willowherb and yellow-cress; asphodel with its pale and creamy inflorescences, irises with their indigo flags and curved, scimitar-like leaves await only the warm breeze of spring to waft them gently. At its best Ithilien is a paradisaal garden, a perfect mixture of deep green grass, flowers, sturdy trunks and leafy branches. And there are no dangerous beasts to threaten the traveller; the only threats are those on two legs.

3.31 LAYOUT OF MAR MALIARNIN ESTATE

Mar Muliarnin (S. “House of Wine-pressing”), The Winehouse lies in a sheltered vale overlooking Nan Ascarwing. The house is a villa built in the traditional Dunedain style: expansive, with long, low buildings surrounding an enclosed courtyard. The villa has every amenity, including two bath-houses, a small shrine, gardens, a park and, of course, extensive cellars. The workrooms where the wines and ales are produced are all in the villa’s square compound.

1. The Villa. The villa is fully detailed below (see 3.32). It is a stone structure with plastered walls cream in color, mostly covered with creeping plants such as purple-flowering clematis, *nellum* (S. “running ivy”) and *milithrug* (Rh. “honeysuckle”). The roof has a shallow slope and deep eaves to give shelter when the sun is at its hottest and is made of baked clay tiles a dull brown-orange in color. The whole building is no more than 10’ or so tall, but has a large area underground. Lining the track just before the gates to the villa are four pairs of great lime trees, each over 200 years old.

2. Gardens. The villa has truly excellent gardens, until recently supervised by a staff of six gardeners. There are four plots; one walled, the others surrounded by hedges of box trees. The walled garden contains all the most fragile and precious herbs, including some healing herbs. Most are used for flavoring ales, wines and, most of all, liquors. In the hedged gardens grow hops, sage, sweet heather, myrtleberries, redcurrants, bilberries, thyme, marjoram, white and green parsley, sloe bushes, towering *elderflowers* (S. “rimaurlos”), *chicory* (S. “intyath”), burdock and dandelion. A sideline of the villa’s winemaking operation is the production of scents and perfumes, used for flavorings and also for cosmetics: Mal Maliarnin produces pot pourris, lavender dollies, essential oils, soaps and waters.

At the top end of the gardens are three large cisterns supplying water under pressure to the villa through underground conduits. The cisterns are filled by two springs, and also by rainwater. One supplies the north wing (Ale and Wine Rooms and Perfumery), another the bath houses and the third the heating and kitchens.

3. Vineyards. The southerly and westerly faces of the hill behind the villa are set with vines and trellises. Here the grapes for the delicious wines are grown and picked. Between the courtyards run well-worn tracks suitable for the donkeys laden down with heavy baskets and small handcarts trundled by weary servants at the end of a long summer’s day. Between the individual plots stand olive trees and tall sunflowers, as well as a cover of goat’s nettle which keeps not only goats, but most other small browsing creatures, away from the precious vines and their succulent fruits.

4. The Dam. The Dam is of fairly old construction; pale stone carved with delightful imagery: flowers, nymphs, fish and birds abound in bas relief all along its length. Although not tall, it is about 150 yards broad, holding back a swathe of water to form a tranquil pool in a semi-wild park. A gushing, gurgling spout sculpted in the form of a large frog forms the exit for the stream in the centre of the Dam. At this point it broadens from being a yard-wide path with a balustrade of twisted columns. There is a small terrace covered with a bower of rose briars and honeysuckle grown from trenches of earth set in the stonework.

5. The Lake and Park. The Lake (Lin Iarenen) is a long, narrowing pool. It is not very deep, seldom exceeding more than twenty feet, and has a thick silt all over its bottom. About the east side of the lake are great clusters of flag-irises and tall reed beds. On the still surface of the water float variegated water lilies, some quite wide, with leaves two feet in diameter. Tethered to the bank of the Lake close to the Dam are two smallish punts, each suitable for two people at most. Long poles to propel them are laid within the punts.

The Lake has a good variety of wildlife, with small rodents such as voles, raccoons and shrews, and also birds. There are six or seven species of duck, some geese, a pair of herons, various wading birds including Ithilien’s rare blue plover, and also small diving birds such as the royal kingfisher and the inkspot crake. Occasional visitors include the magnificent pink flamingoes from Ethir Anduin, stately cranes and the curious little egret.

The Park is a semi-wild and mostly unmanaged area up the western side of the Lake. A flagstone path runs along the lakeshore for a quarter of a mile and leads on a small distance to a summerhouse. The summerhouse is round, built from sandalwood and cedarwood with special shutters made from resin-treated parchment. Stretched out tightly, they are highly translucent and in summer allow a gentle light to filter through without the heat of the sun; they also give off a pleasant scent.

The rest of the Park is made up of original trees left from the forest that once grew throughout this dell, separated by glades of grass and plants. Many of the plants are wild, but there are also specially planted beds and herbaceous borders. Indistinct footpaths run here and there through the Park and there are many surprises to be discovered: a tiny spring and rock pool; a grot artificially widened to make a small cavern in which a statue has been set, with ledges for candles and rushlights all about the walls; rustic seats and benches covered by cunningly constructed pergolas, wound with bindweed; and a huge horn carved from dark stone in whose earth-filled mouth are planted a profusion of different orchids timed to flower for eight months of the year.

6. The Track and Ford. The main tracks to the villa run down from the North Road some miles north of Andiant and up from a small wooden bridge over *Iarenen* (S. "Berrywater"). The two tracks meet above the Park and below the villa itself, the relatively steep grades making the track negotiate a number of long winding sections so that the heavily laden wagons bringing supplies (including grains for the beer-making) or distributing produce can be more easily drawn. The tracks are well worn and occasionally have some grit or gravel to make a firmer surface. They are also marked by small rounded stones surmounted by metal crescents.

The southerly track carries on down beside the stream until it joins Sir Ascarwing; the northern track crosses the stream at Iach Iarenen. It is usually easy to cross here, as large stone slabs, now somewhat worn and rutted, have been sunk into the stream's bed for carts and wagons, and for travellers on foot there are stepping-stones. However, after heavy rains the stream can be unexpectedly vigorous, ready to sweep the unwary away and toss them a mile or so downstream to the cataract at the head of the Lake.

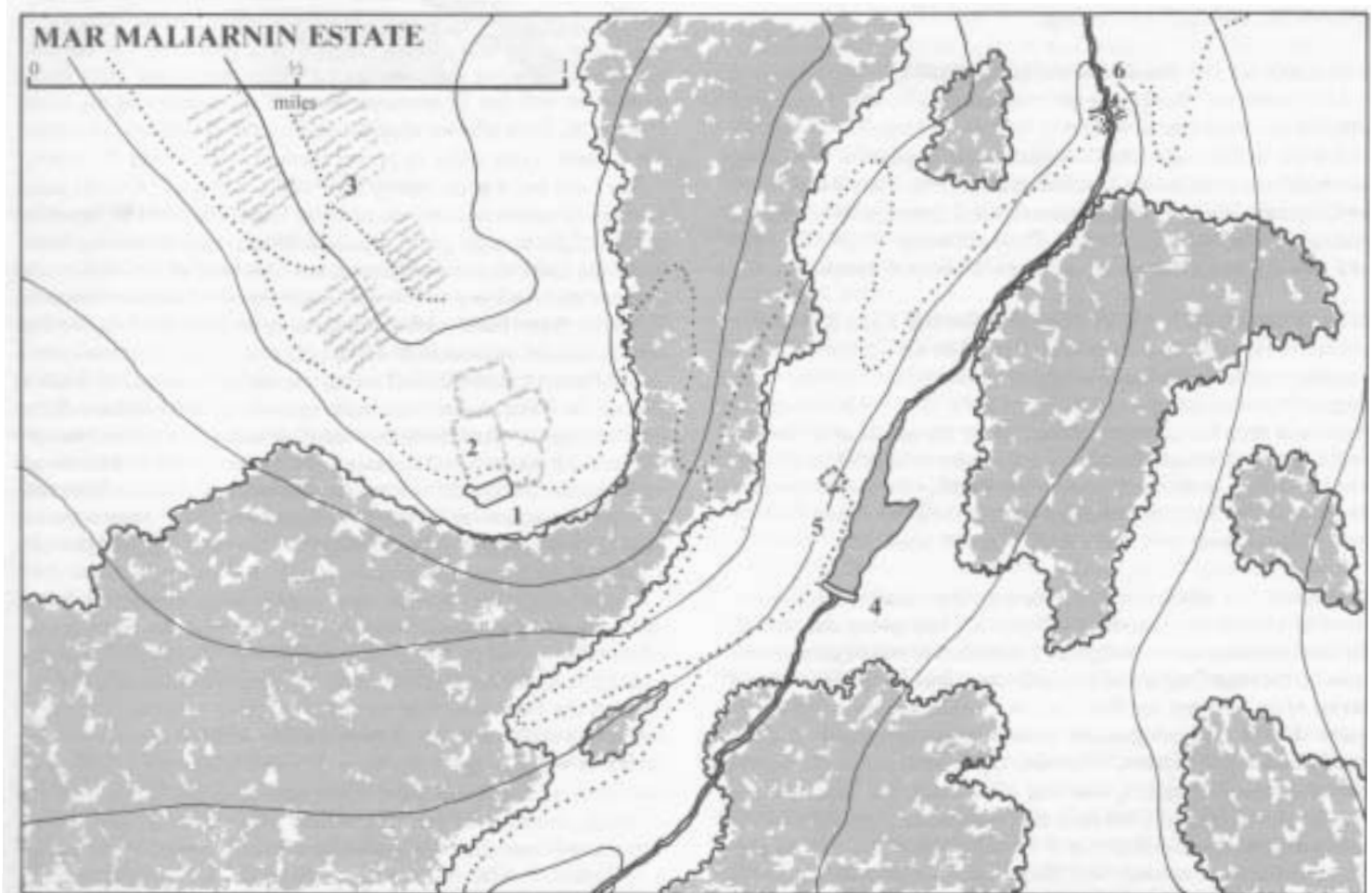
Standing beside the ford is a relic of days when the Woses lived on both sides of Anduin and not just in Druadan Forest. A graven stone Pdkel-man, dull grey and smooth yet somehow unweathered, keeps guard over the crossing from the shelter of an outspread cypress. The ground around it is peculiarly clear of tall or creeping plants.

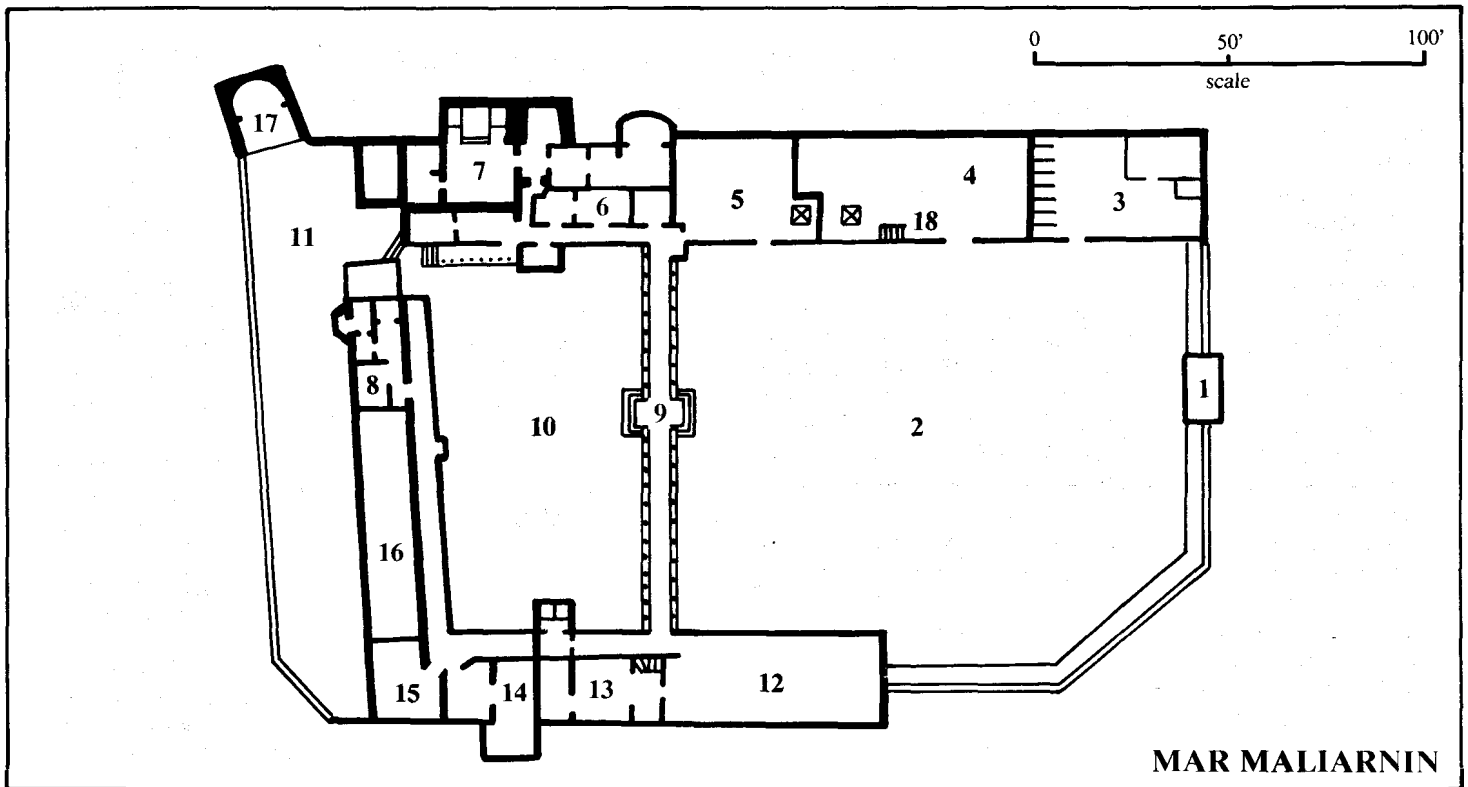
3.32 LAYOUT OF THE VILLA AT MAR MALIARNIN

1. Gatehouse. The presence of a gatehouse in the courtyard wall is formal rather than functional. The gates are a pair of 8' wide by 9' high cedarwood doors. At night they are barred simply to keep wild animals out of the yard. There are small rooms on either side of the gates; these are used for the storage of equipment used in house and garden maintenance, such as barrows, a ladder, shovels, mallets, supplies of pegs, nails, stakes, rope, twine and so on. There is also a latrine in the gatehouse. A small door opens in the right-hand gate, just 5' x 2'.

2. Outer Court. The outer courtyard is bounded by the 10' plastered wall and parts of the north and south wings and floored with packed dirt. Between the gatehouse and the north wing there are two great wine presses stored beneath canvas sheets. Also stored in the courtyard may be up to three wagons and carts, the draft horses or oxen stabled in the north wing.

3. Stables. The far end of the north wing is occupied by stabling room for oxen and horses. There are eight stalls for the latter and a larger open byre for the former. The stables include a good supply of fresh straw in racks overhead; the straw is cropped in pastures in the upper Nan Iarenen every fall. There is also tack for the horses here, and a small boarded area in the hayloft where a stablelad sleeps.





4. Wine Room. This large workroom is where the vats of pressed grape juice are prepared and fermented. The great presses remain outside, but during the harvest (which is staggered over several weeks) the juice is brought in here and graded, then divided up into vats for the processing which turns it into wine. The special wines are also prepared here, and there are various pieces of machinery, utensils and articles used in these varying processes. In the stone-flagged floor are two large trapdoors. One has steps leading down to the cellars (#18), the other is a straight drop down, with a rope and pulley attachment connected to an overhead beam. Another feature of the room is the large washing tank where bottles and other containers are rinsed out to be reused.

5. Ale Room. Another large workroom with vats of metal and large kettles for the distillation of spirits. The Ale Room in fact is used for many purposes, and not just brewing. A mill for crushing and cracking the hops and grain which must be laboriously hand-cranked stands in one corner. In another two coopers work constructing all sizes of barrels and tuns, from small kegs holding half a gallon to vast butts used in the initial drawing of ale and Maliarnin wine. There is a straight-down trapdoor here like that in the Wine Room, so barrels and tubs can be lowered to the cellars.

6. Perfumery. These small interconnecting rooms together form an aromatic workshop where a hundred different flowers and herbs are pressed and dried and crushed, their oils and essences extracted and all manner of scented cosmetics produced. There are small drying ovens built into the walls of one room, opposite which is a long bench fitted with scales and measures, mortars and pestles, tiny mills for grinding, scrapers and choppers. In the adjacent room are stills and retorts for the separation of the essential oil of plants and herbs. Above the ovens of the drying room are tanks of rainwater; the steam driven off these tanks drives a air fan and then condenses down conduits in this room to vats of purified water. Fresh water for washing is also supplied to this room under pressure from the cisterns at the top of the gardens.

7. Baths of Dry Heat. This collection of rooms formed one of the two bath-houses (the baths of damp heat are #8). Here the bather is subjected to a hot, dry heat which induces violent perspiration, then has to plunge immediately into a bath of cold water. The bath-house is fronted onto the inner courtyard by a colonnaded walk which leads to the west wing and along to the adit (#9).

The baths are heated by an underfloor steam system. All the floors are raised on low columns made from clay tiles. The furnace, located next to the Perfumery, is supplied with water which is turned to steam and fed through channels under the reception room and dressing room to the *urbenen-rond* (S. "hall of dry heat") where the whole floor and both the walls are heated by the confined steam. There are stone benches with wooden seats here, and niches cut into the wall where oil lamps are placed. In here fragrant herbs (from a selection available) are placed in order to lend a peaceful, relaxing or invigorating atmosphere as desired.

The reception room is a pleasantly warm place for relaxing. A rounded alcove is set with comfortable sofas and cushions, there is also a standing harp in one corner, next to an open chest full of extra cushions and rugs. There is also a cupboard containing wine pitchers and cups. The dressing room is warmer still. Around the walls are hooks and racks for discarded clothing, and long, low lockers containing fresh garments. The floor has a splendid mosaic showing Ulmo rising from the sea. This is rather appropriate as there are three plunge baths off the north side of the room. A large square bath is flanked by two smaller D-shaped pools. All the pools have steps leading into them and are about 5' deep at most.

Included in the furnace room is an area for the washing and drying of clothes and household linen.

8. Baths of Damp Heat. This bath suite is entered through a passage reached by steps and a door from the main external corridor. The bath-house comprises a series of rooms in which the heat is graded from warm to very hot, inducing a heavy perspiration to cleanse the pores. The process is then reversed to induce cooling and finally the pores are closed by a cool bath.

The first room is the dressing room, heated by a fire fed from the outside (actually a small furnace). This room is rather more functional and less decorated than the dressing room in #7. Here there are towels and clean robes in perfumed lockers; the Dunedain of the villa habitually take a bath of this sort after a day's work (or sport) changing into fresh clothes for the evening. The dressing room is connected to the heated rooms by the *himith-rond* (S. "cold room"), a passage and open area including a bath of cool water. The bath is 4' deep with two internal steps. It has a lining of tiles glazed in bright green and pale blue and is supplied from a tank located near the furnaces at the north end of the bath-house, and thus is not as cold as the water straight from the cisterns which fills the baths in #7. From the *himith-rond* an arch opens into the *pernor-rond* (S. "warm room"), where the temperature is moderately high. Heating flues running up the walls from floor level and the steps leading into the room are a clue to the raised floor allowing steam to circulate beneath. Here the steam is allowed to percolate into the room producing the "damp heat". The *pernor-rond* has a mosaic floor with an abstract design formed from a pattern of leaves. The final room is the *mennor-rond* (S. "fiercely-hot room"), right by the furnace room and sweltering. There is also a hot semi-circular bath in which the bather can cleanse him or herself.

The furnaces at the end of the block consist of a covered stoking-chamber, with an adjoining fuel-store for faggots of brushwood.

9. Adit. The adit is a covered pathway connecting the north and south wings of the villa and dividing the outer and inner courtyards. The inner court is sited some 3' above the outer, so the adit forms a natural divide atop a wall.

10. Inner Court. The inner courtyard is a paved area, kept clean and neat, and set about with herbs and shrubs in stone troughs. In the courtyard are markings for a sedate yet skillful Dunedain game called *quorhts*. Dark cobbles set between the pavings mark out areas into which heavy discs of wood topped with iron hooks must be slung. The competitors use long (7') poles with a short length of chain at one end, terminating in an iron ring, the ring being used to pick up and then toss the discs. The game combines elements of checkers, billiards and curling, and is said to be very good training for both the mind and the body. A rack of the poles (*quorhtyards*), together with five discs (*quorhtings*) and two mounted abacus scorers stands in the colonnade in front of the baths (#7).

11. Terrace. The terrace is reached up further steps from the inner courtyard, making it 6' above the ground around, which gently shelves away from the villa on the south and western side. The terrace has splendid prospects down Nan Iarenen to Nan Ascarwing and across to the Emyrn Fuin, looming in the distance. The terrace has a paved area surrounded by greensward. At the edge is a low (2') wall over which bushy ground plants tumble.

The terrace is set with some wooden furniture sited in a sheltered spot; the Master and his family are often wont to take their midday or evening meals here when the weather is clement.

12. Servants' Hall. The estate's servants all live and sleep in the same communal area. This apparent lack of privacy is in fact the norm and well accepted in their society. The hall is divided off from the rest of the villa by the kitchens and stores. This room is somewhat

higher than the other buildings of the villa and is over 50' long. Married couples curtain themselves off from others at the eastern end of the room; there are many beds, no more than simple wooden slatted frames. The hall is connected to the adit and the kitchens and also has two large doors opening onto the outer courtyard. The room is light and airy with numerous windows and whitewashed walls. When the season is cold, two great hearths are kept burning in the middle of the hall; vents in the roof allow the smoke out.

13. Kitchens. Mar Maliarnin has many hungry mouths to feed and five men and women are kept busy here day in, day out. There is a large circular oven on top of which numerous metal hobs and griddles are set. Against the south wall there is an open hearth for roasting and boiling the huge cauldrons which hang from an iron framework above it. The kitchen, full of hustle and bustle, produces its own bread, serves two good hot meals plus the traditional Dunedain cold breakfast of carved meats, raw vegetables tossed in dressings of honey and herbs, oatcakes or scones and soured milk. Hot meals include roast boar, beef, game birds baked in herbs and wine, deliciously thick and creamy soups, crusty pies snuffed with eggs, ham and vegetables and hotpots of yellow-fatted venison joints and succulent roots, cooked for a day in sealed earthenware vessels.

From the kitchen there are steps down to the cellars (#18). These are located by the door to the outer corridor. Some supplies are also kept in storerooms beside the kitchen, including household linen and foods which are used so often that a supply right at hand is needed, such as flour, fresh vegetables, spices and herbs, wine and so on. More of all these items is stored downstairs.

14. Dining Room. This room and the others of the west wing are all heated by under-floor steam flues extended from the baths (#8). This is something more than a dining room, however, and is perhaps the most splendid room in the villa. The forepart of the room is a large ante-room for entertainment, divided from the dining room proper by projecting pilasters decorated with interlaced bands of red, corresponding to the mosaic strip on the floor which divides the two main mosaic floors.

The floor of the ante-room has an octagonal design. The inner segments display stylised figures of nature spirits in the form of nymphs and dryads, joined by flowing waters, tree branches and swirling clouds. In the centre is the figure of Yavanna, veiled and swathed in green. In each of the four corners a season is represented by a figure of one of the Free Peoples: an Elf for spring with an armful of flowers and a bird perched upon her shoulder, a Woman for summer carrying a garland of blossom and fruits, a Man for fall with a scythe, a sheaf of corn and a vine laden with grapes, a Dwarf for winter, cloaked and hooded with heavy boots holding a hare and a dead branch.

Adjacent to the dining room, on the opposite side of the corridor which opens into the ante-room, is a latrine. It has seating set over a deep sewer and wooden partitions to ensure privacy. There is a pipe supplying running water to complete personal ablutions; it is also used to flush out the latrines on a regular basis.

15. Living Room. The lounge area, used by those members of the household who do not work during some portion of the day, has resting and recreational furniture and furnishings. There are comfortable seats, draperies and silk hangings, several tables, a stone cooler which can be packed with ice to ensure a good supply of cold drinks during the hot months (see the ice room in the cellars, #18), some gaming boards for mereilles, chess and gwithbil, also called the "game of kings", and several bird cages. Decorations in the room include pale blue painted bands on the wall and potted plants such as hartstongue ferns and miniature orange trees. The room is also used for music and poetry.

16. Chambers. The bed chambers of the household are mostly sumptuous. The Maliarnin family is fairly extensive and also well off; all have rooms in the west wing here, accessed by a corridor with many windows overlooking the inner court. The chambers contain a comfortable bed (either single or double), built well off the ground and usually with high sides as well as intricately carved headboards. All the materials here are fine: silks and tufted wools from Lmsarnach, quilts stuffed with goose feathers and down, chests of gethen-wood with brass clasps and chased locks. Individual members of the household have a few personal clothes but many of the robes they wear are loose-fitting and universal. Robes are often suited to a purpose: there are working clothes, gowns for the evening, pure white robes for religious ceremonies and devotions. The Dunedain enjoy reds, purples, oranges and blues most of all; many dyes are extracted from herbs grown here, in fact.

Any bedroom may contain a number of valuable items. Ladies may own costume jewelry, 1-20 pieces valued at 1-100s each; these items include earrings, rings, necklaces of gold or pearls, brooches and buckles. There may also be valuable perfumes and scents and fittings (lamps, candlesticks, ewers) plated with silver or gold, or finely crafted. In gentlemen's rooms there may also be a small store of coins, a decorated weapon or tunic etc. The largest room is shared by Hir Maliamin and his wife; both are in their late middle age, about 110 years old. His treasures are stored in the cellars (#18).

17. Temple. This small temple or shrine is used by all the members of the household; in religious observance the Dunedain make no distinction between servants and family. The shrine is built on the site of a spring and its location originally determined the location of the entire villa. Water is important to the Dunedain as the manifestation of the Vala Ulmo, Master of the Waters, and Uinen, his Maia servant who is mistress of fresh water. Before the cisterns were built, this spring supplied all the water for the villa.

The shrine has a curved back inside, and there is an octagonal central pool capable of holding one thousand and fifty gallons of water. The floor and pool are flagged and cemented, the edge of the pool being tiled in turquoise and green. On the walls are small mosaics representing wave patterns; these have some traceries of silver and precious stones such as lapis lazuli and mother of pearl. In regular worship, members of the household don simple white robes and come here together or individually for contemplation. There are also more exuberant ceremonies including a form of baptism and an annual blessing of the spring when this area is carpeted with blossoms laid out in patterns marked out on the pavement.

18. The Cellars. More extensive than any of the rooms or room-complexes in the villa are the cellars. Here there are thousands of bottles of wine stored, some a century old or more, along with tuns of maturing wines and beers, store-rooms and plenty of hidden corners. There are a number of ways down to the cellar, including steps by the kitchen and in the Wine Room and trapdoors with lowering devices in the Wine Room and Ale Room.

Most of the cellars are taken up with racks of wine and the great barrels on their sides where drinks are matured. The more expensive drinks are in smaller barrels. These cellars are just 6'-7' high, stone vaulted chambers like an upturned ship. Each runs for over 120' about 20' wide at the bottom. The air down here is very cool and there is a special room with doubly thick doors where ice is stored. The ice is cut from Lin Iarenen in the depths of winter and placed here in great chunks. The room is so well insulated and so far underground that it never melts. During the year it can be chipped away as required.

Behind one of the great barrels (packed with earth so it doesn't sound empty!) is a concealed door. Behind it is a passage leading to a small room situated directly below the Shrine (#17). The room is entered through a locked door of hardened steel (+5). The door is very cold to the touch (take a cold critical if in contact for a minute or more; "A" for the first minute, "B" for the second and so on) and has a keyhole in the centre. The lock is Extremely Hard (-20) to pick, the secret being to press one of the four inscribed panels placed around the lock. These are the names of Ulmo, Manwe, Orome and Tulkas; naturally enough Ulmo is the one forming part of the locking device. In the room there is a magical light source centered within one of the most beautiful pieces of art; a 22" high translucent jade statue of Osse and Uinen together in a tempestuous sea. The statue is of Elvish manufacture and is highly valuable. Anyone removing the statue will provoke the wrath of Ulmo, and every time they come into contact with fresh water, it will react in the worst possible way (-75 to all maneuvers connected with water). This reaction can be prevented by devotion at the Shrine after the demise of the Maliarnin family, so that the statue can be resited in a new place of observance. The exact value of the statue is up to the GM.

Of course, the entire contents of the cellar are valuable. There are stores of expensive scents and perfumes, of soaps and oils, of liquors and cordials all of which could be looted by the characters if they are looking for some money on the side. Few of the doors here are locked, and those are only simple (Easy (+20) to pick); there may well be keys at hand in Hir's bedroom. One small pantry has a desk with a false bottom drawer. When this is pulled out, a secret panel (Extremely Hard (-30) to spot) is revealed. Within this hiding place are concealed some 1,500gp, 2, 500 and a number of other precious items at the GM's discretion, but none of them magical.

3.33 LAYOUT OF ONDERYTH DUATH

- 1. Dol Henfin.** *Dol Henfin* (S. "Eyebrow Hill") is a towering, curving ridge which ends abruptly at an ancient fault line, the *Onderyth Duath* (S. "Cliffs of Shadow"). It is mostly wooded, the trees being mixed larch, pine and cedar. There are also some cypresses and holly (ilex) trees. The rock is a greyish-brown sandstone like the rest of the *Emyn Fuin* (S. "Hills of Gloom"), perhaps an outthrust spur of the Ephel Duath. The hills are often shrouded in low clouds and mist and generally have a dull appearance. The North Road cuts through these hills within Taur Ithilien.
- 2. Track.** The track is well concealed and does not start right by the Road; rather the bandits take different routes to the tree which marks the track's start. Much of the track lies within copses and groves of trees, skirting the open glades and launds scattered through the rising wood. It is also quite steep in places, although still suitable for horses if the characters are riding. If the bandits have been alerted to pursuers they may choose to ambush them in one of the copses.
- 3. The Cleft.** A thicket of prickly holly trees covers a deep gulley, known as the Cleft. It descends steeply, exiting on the face of the cliff some twenty feet below the crest. The Cleft is tricky to climb down, and any stumble could result in an inadvertent plunge 250' down to the cliffs' base. The worst time is during a rainstorm when the flow of water along the bottom easily dislodges even large stone and boulders, undermining them, and there are also soil slips. At the foot of the Cleft is a narrow ledge leading along the cliff eastwards.

1. **The Ropewalk.** The ropewalk is a dangerous path along the face of the cliff to the bandits' lair. It starts off as a narrow ledge, 3'6" wide. Negotiating this is normally an Easy MM, but may get more difficult at night (+2 levels of difficulty), in winds (+1/2 levels), rain (+1 level) or ice/snow (+2 levels). Thus at night, in a howling blizzard, it would be a Sheer Folly MM.

The ropewalk gets its name from the series of rope bridges connecting the shelves and ledges together. The first of these is after some hundred yards of ledge; the bridge hangs free over the sheer drop. On the other side a series of smaller ledges are connected by steps cut in the rock and two short plank bridges. The rope bridge is constructed from three thick ropes bound together to form the footing, with two rope handrails connected in a V-shape by cording. Both ends of the bridge are securely fixed but it bounces and sways very easily.

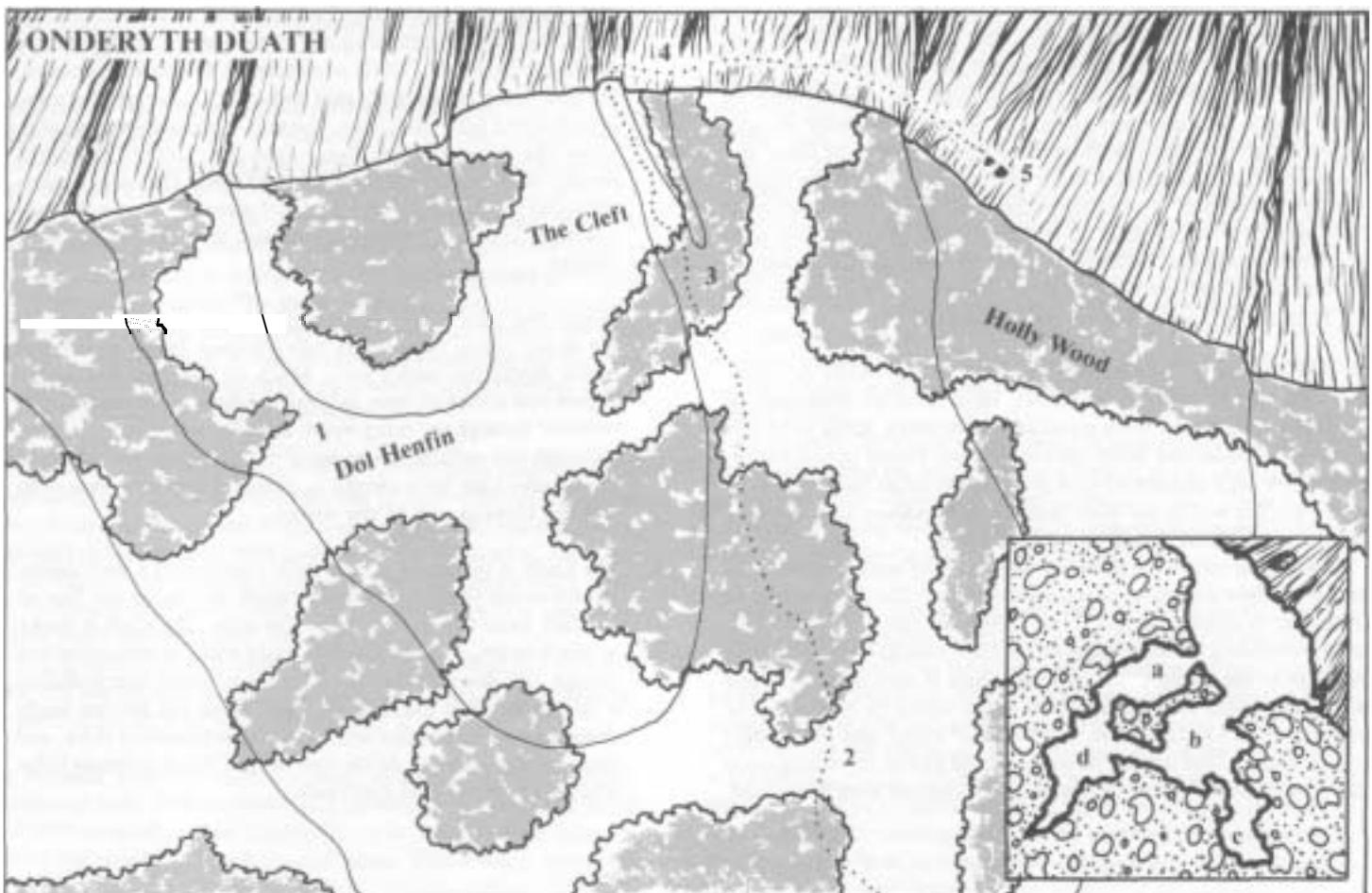
After the scrambling section there is another longish rope bridge, then a fair stretch of ledge. At one point there is a small cleft or cave which is unoccupied, but might scare the PCs. After this ledge is the final rope bridge. This does not hang free but is attached to the cliff face by great iron pins; it is made from two thick cables joined by planks of wood. The outer cable is held up by suspension cords fixed overhead at intervals. Some of the planks in this bridge are rotten and may break if a heavy character comes down this way. At the end of this walk is another ledge which leads around a corner and opens out into a sort of terrace in front of the caves.

5. **Caves.** There are two entrances to the caves where the four bandits live. The larger is usually covered by three heavy drapes in order to keep out the cold, the smaller has just one drape hung inside. Inside there are four areas, all formed from natural faults and fissures in the rock. Only one or two places in the connecting passages have been enlarged and rounded off to prevent

too many bumped heads. The first cave (a) has a fire and is the sleeping place of whoever is put on watch by Caerline (he does take turns himself). Unless the bandits are all out raiding, there is a 90% chance of someone here during the day, and 100% at night (but only **50%** awake). There are also cooking stores here, with food, wine and utensils all stuffed into a crude rack nailed to the wall.

The cave with the larger (and usually blocked) entrance (b) is home to the junior three bandits. Each has a sleeping roll and a sack or leather bag stuffed with clothes (all dirty) and other gear, such as whetstones and oil, torches, flints, knives, odd bits of treasure (1-5 pieces worth 1-20sp each) and so on. When the draperies are hung and fixed up, light is provided by two torches stuffed into cracks in the wall. Curistel also keeps a diary; this is concealed beneath a heavy stone (Very Hard (-20) to spot). If the PCs find the diary, it can be used in two ways: to establish that the bandits are not responsible for the attack on the villa despite their predilection for pretending to be Orcs; and it may also contain a clue to some treasure somewhere.

Further back from this shared cave is a twisting cleft (c) which ends in a jumble of boulders. However, the perceptive may notice that the smoke from torches and the fires sometimes wends its way through to this cleft and up — a sure sign that this is a chimney through the cliff. Indeed, after a short climb of ten feet or so through two twists in the narrow rock ceiling, there is a rope ladder. The initial climb is a Hard Climbing MM, the rope ladder is 30' long and either an Easy Climb MM or a Medium MM. This exits in the woods above the cliff where the caves are; the bandits use the chimney as a back exit and also sometimes for lowering supplies down, particularly things like firewood which they can simply chop up and drop down the hole.



The final cave (d) is claimed by Caerlinc; kept neat and tidy with a bedroll, chest of clothes and personal effects and even a makeshift wardrobe of canvas draped on a wooden frame. In a large box at the back of the cave are various items taken from a raid on an Orc camp; these are used to confuse anyone on their trail. Hidden under the box is a metal strongbox stolen from a merchant used for stashing the bandits' gold. The key is hidden on a high ledge on the rear righthand Wall, 9' off the floor and very difficult to discover unless its approximate location is known. The strongbox contains 160gp, 345sp and some few small trinkets worth 2-20sp each.

3.4 THE TASK

The task in this adventure is to discover the reason for the delay in the supplies of wine and ales to Firichal the Winemerchant. The reason is, as has been noted, that Hir Maliarnin and all his family and workers have been slaughtered by Orcs of the Green Claw. In the process of discovering this, the player characters also have the chance to meet one or two groups of the Orcs themselves, and also some bandits who are operating in the area.

3.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

This first adventure is one in which it is easy to start the players off. Even if this is the first time your players get together, or the first time their characters meet, what could be more natural for them but to meet in that social gathering Place, the inn?

Firichal the Winemerchant will be well known to the characters as a moderately flamboyant man (a lesser Dunadan), liked by his customers for his generosity and fairness. He also employs attractive bartenders! For their part, the PCs will be known as men and women restless and looking for a bit of adventure, so Firichal approaches them when he gets told by the guard that men can't be spared to investigate. He can offer a reward for information and assistance rendered, but it is hoped that the players will be sufficiently motivated by the lure of adventure and mystery. Firichal can also lend the characters horses if they need them.

The first part of the journey, from wherever you wish the characters to start to when they arrive in North Ithilien, will be relatively uneventful and the characters can either skip over it or use this time to get to know each other. There may be encounters with other travellers on the road, with guards and the like but it is unlikely that the PCs will have any fighting to do.

3.42 AIDS

The player characters will receive little assistance or aid beyond Firichal's initial help. He can tell them the exact location of Mar Maliarnin and a map of the area could be obtained for a small price in any decent sized town (use the Player's Map supplied at the back of this booklet).

The only potential sources of aid in the adventure are the bandits (if the PCs play the encounter with the bandits right, they could persuade them to go on a looting expedition to help get rid of the Orcs) and the Pukel-man (see 3.31 at #6) if the characters get involved fighting the Orcs near the Lake.

If you wish, you may have one of the player characters know Hir Maliarnin; perhaps s/he once worked on his estate or visited his family and stayed at the villa. Naturally, they should not be aware of any of the secrets of the villa.

3.43 OBSTACLES

Obstacles to the successful completion of this encounter are the bandits and the Orcs themselves. The basic idea of the adventure is for the characters to collect what information and take what action they can. There are no Special tricks or traps involved, although if the characters start chasing the bandits to their lair, they could well be ambushed, either on the track or the ropewalk. Similarly, if the characters are not circumspect in the way they approach the villa, broadcasting their presence to the Orcs, they might find a nasty surprise.

3.44 REWARDS

Rewards from this adventure can include plunder from the villa and the bandits, some money or other form of thanks (free drinks) from Firichal and the opportunity to rid the world of some vicious scum (depending on how you look upon Orcs and bandits). There may also be the idea of seeking out the Orcs' lair and finding their hoard...

3.5 ENCOUNTERS

There is no random encounter table for this adventure; the only things to be encountered are the bandits and the Orcs described in the NPCs section (3.2). Most of North Ithilien is a relatively safe Place; food is not hard to come by, and if the characters stick to travelling by roads and tracks they are unlikely to meet any violently-inclined wild beasts.

If you wish to add some additional encounters to the adventure, you should use animals from Table ST-2 Normal Middle-earth Animals on p86 of the *MERP* rulebook; you could also introduce other bandits and rogues using the Master Character Table ST-3 or NPCs described in other *ICE* supplements.

3.51 ENCOUNTERING THE BANDITS

The player characters should come across recent signs of an ambush on their way to Mar Maliarnin. This might be either on the North Road or on the track up Nan Ascarwing, depending the route the players choose. First they spot a mule wandering on the path, its saddlebags torn and emptied. Close by, if they investigate, they will find another mule wandering in the woods. A little way further up the path is the body of a middle-aged man. His corpse is dragged to one side and is fairly hacked about; he has obviously been involved in a battle to the death. Also nearby is an armored man, probably a bodyguard. He has been struck by two black-feathered missiles (one arrow, one bolt), and has also received a sword-thrust to the body.

If the characters search properly (a Routine (+30) Track or Perception Roll) they will also discover a cleaver fashioned in orkish design from black Steel. A Hard (-10) Track Roll is needed to discover the trail leading from the site of the ambush. It has not been deliberately covered in any way. Absolute Success on the roll indicates to the tracker that four ambushers left this way; if they have raised any doubts about it really being Orcs, they will also guess that these are the feet of Men, not Orcs. The trail eventually leads to the track ascending Dol Henfin (see 3.33 at #2).

If the characters do not track down the bandits before visiting the villa, there is a **50%** chance that they will be ambushed on their return. Read the character notes in section 3.2 carefully; these will tell you all about the bandits and how to organise and run such an attack.

3.52 ENCOUNTERS AT THE VILLA

When the characters arrive at the villa, Gaballol's bukra will be there ransacking the bath-houses. If the characters arrive in daylight, the Orcs will be sleeping except for one on watch. The most likely place for them to be is the cellars or the furnace room. Note that in full daylight their activity is **-60**; in a daylight room this is halved.

The villa is now something of a charnel-house, with corpses weeks old still lying around in untidy heaps. The kitchens have been raided for meat and drink and the living rooms, chambers etc. have been gratuitously wrecked and vandalized. The servants' hall is the worst place with some twenty rotting bodies making the air fetid and extremely noxious. Anyone spending much time close to the corpses or in that hall stands a chance of contracting a debilitating and potentially fatal disease: there is a base 40% chance to catch it, adjusted for any precautions (or lack of them) taken by the character. If they are infected, they will suffer a fever for two days, then must make a 4th level RR or go into convulsions and shaking palsy (**-40** activity and halve ST & AG) for 3-10 days. Each day 10% of concussion hits are lost. The character then recovers at a natural rate but after a week must make another 4th level RR, failure indicating sudden relapse and death.

The villa has been described as it was in use so that you can also use it for other adventures at a later date in another place. However, when giving descriptions to the players, remember that the house has been the scene of a bloody massacre at the hands of fifteen Orcs.

One important point to mention to the **PCs** (particularly if you intend to run the other adventures in this booklet) is that many of the bodies appear torn and ripped, almost shredded. The victims died as much, if not more, from claw and bite wounds than they did from injuries caused by weapons. This is because the 'Orcs responsible were Scara-hai, transformed temporarily into hideous Wolf-creatures.

3.53 ENCOUNTERS BY THE LAKE

If you wish, you may have another bukra of Scara-hai searching in the Lake. These will be led by Rhuksk2, a particularly vicious and violent Orc of hideous appearance. Where other Orcs are cowardly enough to look to their defense in combat, Rhuksk8 will always use all his OB to attack an opponent. The characters are unlikely to notice the presence of this bukra unless they search the Park or venture down to the Lake in the evening. The Orcs hole up in the shaded grot (see **3.31 #5**) during the hours of daylight but their guttering torches can be seen from the villa's windows in the dark. An important point to remember is that Orcs are scared of running water and indeed cannot swim. Only under Rhukski's direst threat have they ventured out onto the Lake in the punts to investigate reed beds and the nests of herons and moorhens, seeking the elusive treasure.

If the characters create a great noise at the villa or otherwise attract these Orcs' attention, Rhuksk8 will lead them cautiously back to the house and attempt to surprise whoever is making the commotion. If a fight ensues, the two scouts may well endeavor to save their own skins and flee back to their lair, up Nan Ascarwing, under An-diant and on to the Ephel Duath.

NPCS IN ORCS OF THE GREEN CLAW

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Cr	Melee OB	Missile OB	Mov/ Man	Notes
Caerlinc ST91,AG30,C098,IC66,IT86,PR59,AP90. *Shield, + 10.	4	87	RL	35*	Y +10	N	67bs	42xb	-5	Lesser Dunadan Warrior, age 42
Bardir ST49,AG90,C063,1G91,IT40,PR54,AP46.	3	39	SL	10	N	N	33ss	28sb/28da	10	Northman/Woodman Scout, age 29.
Moff ST95,AG91,C071,IG63,1T32,PR75,AP100.	2	39	CH	15	N	A	57bs	32sb	5	Rural man Scout, age 22.
Curistel ST78,AG99,C090,1G29,1T96,PR66,AP15.PP6 *+5 longbow.	3	64	CH	20	N	N	36bs	76lb*	0	Dunadan Ranger, age 34.
Gaballol (Shirfik — commander)	4	80	RL	25	Y	A/L	570b (32ob)	32xb	-5* (15)	Scara-hai Warrior
Rhukski Shirfik	4	70	RL	0	N	A/L	52ob	37xb	0* (20)	Scara-hai Warrior
Bukra	2	56	RL	20	Y	N	51wh	31wh	-10	Scara-hai Warrior
	1	44	RL	20	Y	N	43wh	23wh	-10	Scara-hai Warrior
	2	4	2	S	L	5	N	32ma	5	Scara-hai Scout
	1	3	6	S	L	5	N	26ma	5	Scara-hai Scout
PUkel-man	5	150	CH	25	—	—	50Mba	21sb	30	



4.0 TROUBLE AT LITTLEHORN

This adventure can either follow on from the previous adventure (Orcs of the Green Claw), or may stand in its own right. The action takes place in the valley of Sir Ascarwing, a river of North Ithilien, at an old Gondorian outpost in the lower Ephel Duath. The adventure is designed for characters with a little experience, but can be adapted to suit weaker or tougher parties as you need.

4.1 THE TALE OF BARAD PERRAS

Burud Perms (S. “Littlehorn Tower”) is located on the lower slopes of a peak in the Ephel Duath known as *Hullras* (S. “Bighorn”). It overlooks both the headwater streams of Sur Ascarwing, one of the major rivers of North Ithilien, in an area of bleak moorland and screefalls. The tower is old, dating back to the first centuries of the this Age. It was founded by an old Dunadan nobleman who had become obsessed with death. Learning of a rare herb which could prolong life, he determined to move his entire household to the one place where it grew and could be served fresh to him daily. Unfortunately, he was struck on the head by a piece of falling masonry just as the tower was being completed. Despite the fact that almost all of the old man’s fortune had been spent on the place, his son and heir declined the opportunity to move in, leaving only a few staff to maintain the place.

In the sixth century a force of Orcs broke from a hold between here and Cirith Ungol and a band attacked the tower. The tower held out, surprisingly, and a siege ensued. Whilst the guards of Gondor

were occupied elsewhere chasing the main group of rampaging Orcs, the warped human Mage who was assisting these Orcs (and trying to claim the tower as his own power-base) organized a tunneling operation to get into the stronghold. Just before the final touches were put to his grand design, however, relief forces arrived and swept away the besiegers. The Mage and all the Orc commanders were killed in the battle, thus no one discovered the tunnel. After the battle, the tower was locked up and abandoned. Now it stands, forlorn and forgotten....

Or at least it did, until earlier this year. Some six months ago, a band of Scara-hai Orcs arrived under the command of Baltab, a dark and evil Half-troll from the distant wastes of Khand, recruited to serve an even blacker master. Baltab has control of some fifteen bukras of Scara-hai and is visited regularly by the *Karg-Kragors* (Or. “Tearing Fangs”) of the Scara-hai chieftain. These lieutenants carry important messages and give instructions to Baltab.

Since their arrival, the Orcs have carefully planned and executed numerous raids. Initially these were against isolated farmsteads and cottages, but more recently a number of larger targets have been struck. These include Mar Maliarnin, a large villa and vineyard, and Firimas, an Elven village. At the current time, the raiding groups have been recalled to Barad Perras and are awaiting news of an even bigger planned raid, a strike at a larger target in Gondor’s empire.

Just one witness to the Scara-hai’s devastating power has survived, an Elf from Firimas named Thanadirian. He alone managed to slip through the besieger’s net and went in search of help. Mere hours after he left, however, the Scara-hai overcame the village’s defences and slew all the Silvan Elves. Thanadirian is now seeking a personal revenge on the Scara-hai and may well become associated with the player characters as they go looking for those responsible for the slaughter of the lord of Mar Maliarnin and his entire household.

North Ithilien is currently something of a backwater in Gondor. The problems there are not receiving the attention they should since Gondor’s small army is thinly stretched. A moderately zealous captain in Minas Ithil claims his concerns are with the rumors of evil stirring in Mordor and not a few stray Orcs somewhere to the north — if it isn’t just bandits again anyway. The garrison in Osgiliath is needed for maneuvers down Anduin in South Gondor and those in Dagorlad and Dor Rhunen are just too far away. Something will probably be done eventually, but now nobody has the time or inclination to take responsibility for what is happening in Ithilien Wood.

4.2 THE NPCS

All the NPCs in this adventure except the first are denizens of Barad Perras. In addition to those special individuals described here, there are fifteen bukras, each with a leading ShirCik, two warriors and two scouts. A typical bukra is described in the previous adventure — see 3.25 and 3.26.

4.21 THANADIRIAN

Thanadirian is a Silvan Elf from the only Elven settlement in North Ithilien, and one of the very few places where Elves live in Gondor’s realm outside of Pelargir and Edhellond. He is over 900 years old and spent much of his life in contemplation and meditation. He has travelled widely in Rhovanion talking with the growing Mannish groups and races and learning something of their ways; it was this close association with Men which induced him to accompany a group of Elves from Mirkwood to live in Ithilien Wood. The small group settled just northwest of the Cypress Hills close to a bubbling brook and there they stayed until a few weeks ago when the village was attacked by the Scara-hai and, after a short siege, destroyed and burnt. Now Thanadirian is wandering, grief-stricken for his slain friends and seeking revenge in some way on the Orcs.

Thanadirian wears a strange form of clothing made up of numerous continuous strips of shaded greens and browns wound about himself. These conceal many pouches and pockets in which he keeps stores of herbs and other supplies such as lembas. He also goes hooded and shod with soft leather boots that leave barely a trace. His hair is a light and sandy red and his face quite attractive, with glittering blue eyes.

The Elf has some special skills including Herbalism, which is of use in finding and preparing herbal remedies and potions; and Lays and Lore, a skill of knowledge which acts as a bonus to a Static Maneuver roll when trying to find out more about any legendary or historical subject, particularly to do with superstitious beliefs. You may also wish to make him more powerful by giving him the ability to multiply the Power Points available to him if he Meditates under special conditions: e.g., while burning a certain herb, or in the branches of a cypress tree.

Notable Skills: Lays & Lore **SI**, Stalk/Hide 70, Perception 66, Meditation 62, Read Runes 61, Herbalism 60, Use Items 46, Swim 41, Climb 36, Ride 36. *Languages:* Bethteur **5**, Sindarin **5**, Westron **5**, Quenya **5**, Adunaic 4, Morbeth 2, Gramuz 2, Nimmelen 2, Orkish **2**, Eothrik 2. *Spell Lists:* Animal Masterj Direct Channeling, Plant Masterj Spell Defence, Surface Ways. *Base Spells:* 12. *Directed Spells:* 27.

4.22 BALTAB

Baltab is a Half-troll, a cross breed of Olog-hai and Swerting or Variag (no one knows, nor really cares to investigate a 7' tall, jet black, ferocious, club-wielding sorcerer!). He was bred and brought up to unmentionable practices among the eastern tribes, a pupil of the cruellest school imaginable. Being half-troll, Baltab has great strength and constitution; being half-man he has the wit to learn sorcery. His master Gaurhir has taught him the ritual used in enchanting the Scara-hai's wolfskins, the ritual which allows them to transform themselves into howling, fanged wolf-creatures.

Baltab himself is as two-faced as his creations and subjects. With a fearsome visage and a wild mane of hair, he can don his verdant mail which shimmers like a starling's breast or craban's wing and stride fearlessly into battle armed with a great club and net. This is just the sort of leader the Orcs require to become properly efficient battle troops. However, on other occasions he can assume the guise of a mystically powerful leader, a sorcerer to be feared. Then his hair is tied back and oiled and a grim green mask of death conceals his face; he wears swirling robes of deepest green that glow with the viridescence of hellfire and damnation.

Baltab possesses a number of special items. His green steel mail is **+5** (non-magical bonus), made by arcane orkish smithing methods. His green robes are made from a wiry silk material that gives a **+5** RR bonus against all spells. These are enchanted, but through an evil process. Anyone not of evil character who wears the robes will soon find them unbearably itchy and want to tear them off. They will still be itchy for 2-20 days thereafter (-15 activity) unless the curse is removed. He has two rune papers inscribed by his master, both being level 7 Fly spells (Lofty Bridge spell list). Reading these runes is considered a Routine (**+30**) operation unless Baltab is under great stress or is badly injured. He will use them to escape should anything go badly wrong. He also has a more usual form of transport: a great black mare, a steed trained to bear his weight even in battle without shying. The horse is a level 5 warhorse fitted out with green leather tack and cloth mantle.



THANADIRIAN

In combat, Baltab uses a net and/or a two-handed club fashioned from a single piece of malachite, cored with fine steel and with a knobbled surface. The net attack is resolved on Attack Table AT-6 (Grappling); the club on the 2-Handed Weapons Table (AT-3) at -10. If he does not wear his mail, he will maintain a Shield spell instead. He can also use Deflections or Vibrations when not encumbered by mail.

Notable Skills: Sorcerous Rituals **40**, Ride 25, Perception 20, Read Runes 20, Stalk/Hide 10. *Languages:* Westron 4, Morbeth 3, Varadja 2. *Spell Lists:* Essence Hand, Unbarring Ways. *Base Spells* 0, *Directed Spells* -25.

4.23 VIRSH, KARG-KRAGOR

Virsh is one of the two lieutenants of the chieftain of the Scara-hai. His trusted messengers and advisers are drawn from the scouts of the bukras and there is much competition for these high positions. The lieutenants are called *Karg-Kragor* in their own tongue (Or. "Tearing-Fang") and are taught various secret arts including the preparation and use of venoms and poisons. Their symbol of rank is lamellar-reinforced black leather armor and the necklace of wolf's teeth (which gives them **+10** DB). The armor has many spikes and protuberances, but the cautious opponent should not be deceived for not all are strictly parts of the armor, but rather flat-handled blades which the Orc can whip out and hurl with great speed and dexterity. These knives are usually poisoned, either with Asgurath or Uraana (see NPC chart for details of the effects of these poisons).

Virsh is an agile and cunning Scara-hai, although he has not been a Karg-Kragor for long. He is still in awe of Baltab and usually terrified of his true master Gaurhir. However, he can be sufficiently commanding with the other Orcs, even Shirfiks, to ensure his word is heeded. To be merely in awe of Baltab is quite an achievement in itself. If any protracted fight ensues during the adventure, Virsh may take an active or passive role. He may be the best person to sneak out and lay traps for the player characters, or may feel he has to remain back in order to report on the progress of the engagement to his ultimate masters. He may even leave before the end of the conflict.

Notable Skills: *Stalk/Hide 55, Perception 50, Track 35, Poison Lore 35, Climb 30, Trapping 20, Ambush 20. Languages:* *OrkishBcarabit 4, Westron 3, Morbeth 2.*

4.3 LAYOUT OF BARAD PERRAS

The tower known as Barad Perras lies on the slopes of Hallras, a great blunt-nosed mountain in the northern Ephel Duath. The land around is rather bleak moorland, carpeted with heather and ling. The land falls away in front of the tower and on either side giving it a good panoramic view of its surroundings, but there is actually a fair amount of cover from birches, small evergreen trees and shrubs like gorse, broom and hawthorn. The valleys on either side are boggy, while many of the slopes are steep and have scree (great swathes of loose rocks split by the action of frost on the bare stone faces of the mountain above). Scree slopes are treacherous to cross or climb as they can often give way and send the traveller tumbling down, battered and bruised. The underlying rock here is a mixture of slate and sandstone overlaid with volcanic spills of lava which cooled to form pumice. There is no volcanic activity here any more.

1. Scree Slopes. The patches of stones and boulders break up the cover of heather and ling, sown between with crowfoot and goatsbeard and mountain avens. Anyone trying to cross a scree slope must make a Hard MM Roll. An "F" result means the character has fallen down to the bottom of the slope, taking a +10 to +50 M-LCr attack. A result less than 50 means that the character has slipped (50-result) feet, making a noise but doing no damage.

2. Brushwood. This large area is covered with dense stands of broom and gorse, interspersed with clumps of taller pine trees. The dull green brush stands 3-5' high and in spring and summer bright yellow blooms sprout from all the tips. It is possible to force a way through the bushes, although not easy for tall or broad men! Within the brushwood live many hares and rabbits, so those creeping through it should be wary of holes.

3. Tunnel. In a stand of birches, grown about with thorn bushes, brambles and wiry grasses, is a hole in the ground. The presence of the hole has not been discovered by the Scara-hai in the tower, for it was there long before they came. It was delved by other Orcs during a siege of the tower centuries ago. It goes down through slate to a layer of pumice which the Orcs found easy to penetrate.

The tunnel is just 3' high and 3' across and roughly hewn. There is a side branch of the tunnel which unfortunately hit a spring cleaving through the rock. This tunnel is still flooded and in it dwells the spirit of an Orc who was drowned here, now a Corpse Candle. Anyone venturing down to the edge of the water to investigate the light must make a RR against a level 7 spell; if failed, the victim falls into a trance and starts to drown in the water, the Candle draining 4 points of CO every round.

The main tunnel leads on over 200 hundred yards through the porous rock right to the foot of the tower. It was originally intended to be used to sap the foundations of the tower, making part of it collapse so that the Orcs could gain entry. The end of it is stuffed with firewood, still dry and preserved. Should the characters venture down far enough to discover it, they will also realise that it could be fired to help them in any attack. However, beyond the brushwood are a number of crates, crates of magic powders created by the black mage leading the orkish attack. These are the powders used in Gandalf's fireworks and Saruman's incendiaries — explosive charges. The mage was rather inexpert, however, and placed far too much of the powder here, as the characters will find if they use this fortuitous circumstance. The effects of this are detailed in section 4.42 Aids.

The characters should be given the chance to discover the tunnel any time they move through these woods — you could have one of them fall into the 6' wide opening (to land harmlessly on a pile of broken branches and rotting debris).

4. Lookout and Trail. The Scara-hai have worn a faint but noticeable trail from the tower down into the valley of Sir Ascarwing. Anyone following the river upstream may pick up the trail on an Easy (+20) Track roll. It winds its way up the **slope**, skirting the large area of brushwood (#2). At one point it bends around a solitary cypress tree, surprisingly large and bushy for this altitude. Perched in the branches of the tree is a wooden platform, about 15' off the ground, reached by a rope ladder. The platform is usually occupied by a Scara-hai scout on lookout duty. If there is an alarm, the sentry will light a great mass of kindling and oiled rags kept in a large, flat dish on the platform. The metal dish, which resembles a beaten-out shield, is mounted on a tripod of timber baulks.

Anyone scanning the area for signs of the Orcs may notice the lookout with a Very Hard (-20) Perception roll. By the time anyone is close enough to see it, the sentry will have had at least one chance to spot them, his Perception roll being modified by any concealment.

SCARA-HA1



5. Compound. Surrounding the tower is the remains of a courtyard wall, now crumbled and mostly thrown down. The compound is some 80' square, the tower occupying one corner of it. It is completely overgrown with weeds, heather, bracken and so on; the remaining pieces of wall are 1'-4' high and irregular. Where the wall is attached to the base of the tower, a lean-to shack has been built from scavenged materials. This is now the stable for Baltab's mare. She is well trained and may bray if she senses enemies around.

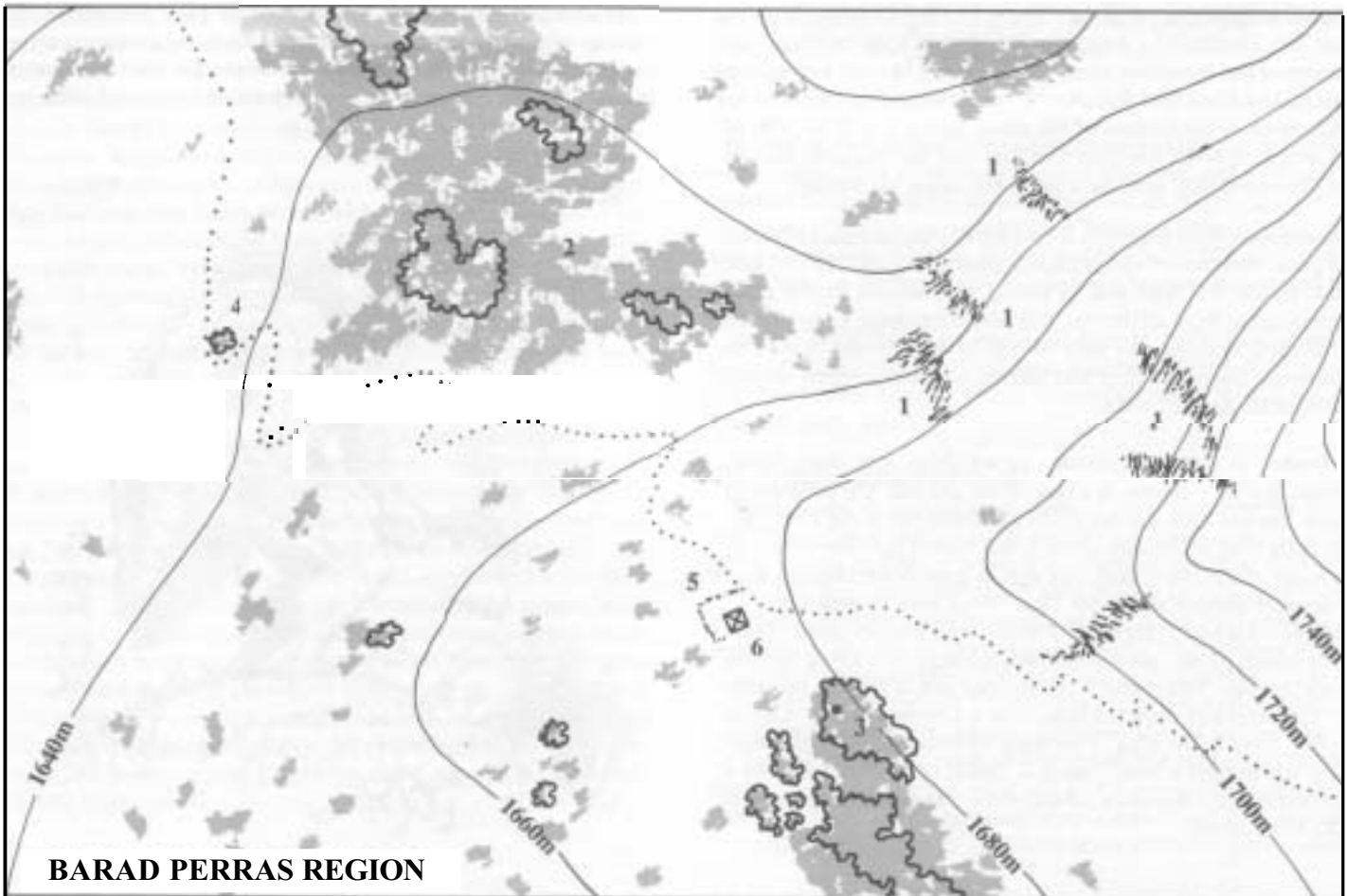
6. Barad Perras. The tower is built in typical style for the period of Gondor's expansion in the early Third Age. It is constructed from hard volcanic rock quarried higher in the Ephel Duath (not the soft pumice mentioned earlier) and thus is a dull grey in its lower stories. The upper story is overhung some 7' on every side and built from stone buttresses forming a frame. Between the buttresses hard wooden planks were cemented, then faced with flints. The roof is angled and made from slate. On each side of the square tower there are three windows on the upper levels, but there are neither windows nor entrances on the partially sunken ground floor; the only door is found at the top of a flight of marble steps on the first floor. The protruding bay is also dressed with white marble. The buttresses of the upper floor are supported by flying angled pilaster brackets.

Level One: This area has 8' ceilings and is lit by dim, smoky torches.

a. Office. This room was at one time the office of the steward or butler who was responsible for the tower. It has now been appropriated by Baltab as an office and sleeping quarters. It is fitted with a bed, a table strewn with odd pieces of parchment, and a chest under the table. This is very heavy and secured to the floor by an iron chain passing through two rings on the chest. It is also bound with iron and locked (Hard (-10) to pick). Baltab carries the key. It contains some money and a couple of small velvet-lined boxes holding jewels (250gp and an assortment of 6 emeralds, 3 pearls and a ruby worth 365gp in total), together with Baltab's personal effects: his robes, mail, rune papers and so on. Naturally these are often out of the chest and in use.

b. Kitchen. In one corner is a large fireplace once fitted with elaborate spits but now simply used to boil huge kettles of orkish mush. There are two of these pots, both burnt and encrusted with months of cooking without cleaning. Elsewhere there are tables and sacks of looted food, racks of utensils brought by the female Orcs practically enslaved here. Some twenty of them spend all their time here, the strongest male Scara-hai being allowed the privilege of taking their choice of them.

One interesting feature of the room is the "dumb waiter" a hand-drawn lift for taking food up to the drawing-room (#e) or the hall (#j). This is still used by the Scara-hai although they had to mend it. It can carry up to 80lbs weight without too much difficulty, and is operated from this room.



c. Store-room. It has a large open area where large items, such as wine butts, sacks of grain, barrels of salted meat and fish and so on, were stored, plus several wooden partitions once fitted with shelving for smaller items. Now it serves the Scara-hai as a crude pen for the few prisoners they bother to take. Each of the partitioned areas now has a sturdy wooden gate fitted with padlocked bolts. In the open area a guard bukra is positioned to make sure there are no escape attempts; they have a table and some stools and pass their time playing various orkish games or sporting with the prisoners. You may include what prisoners you wish in the cells, although few will be in any fit state.

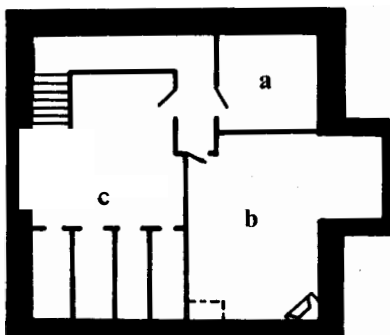
Level Two: This area has 11' ceilings and is lit with windows or torches.

d. The entrance lobby. This area was hung with two great tapestries at one time, one on either wall. These are long gone and the plaster is yellowed and cracked with damp and age. A 5' wide wood-pannelled corridor leads down to stone staircases leading down and up. The place is littered with garbage dropped by the Orcs and there is seldom a sentry. The doors are either left ajar or barred on the inside; the lock is rusted and useless.

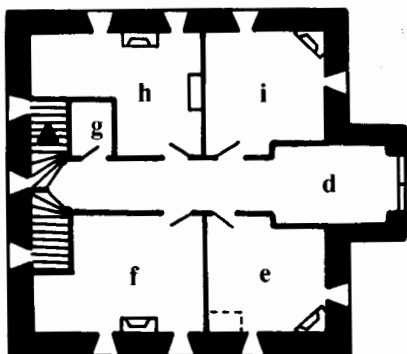
e. Drawing-room. Once used for quiet periods of the day and for entertaining guests in private; in one corner the dumb waiter descends to the kitchens (#b). There is also a fireplace. This room is given over to the use of the Karg-Kragors when visiting from the chieftain. Virsh will be staying here when the adventurers arrive. There is a bed, a high table with two stools, and a low table with a couch. All are rather filthy.



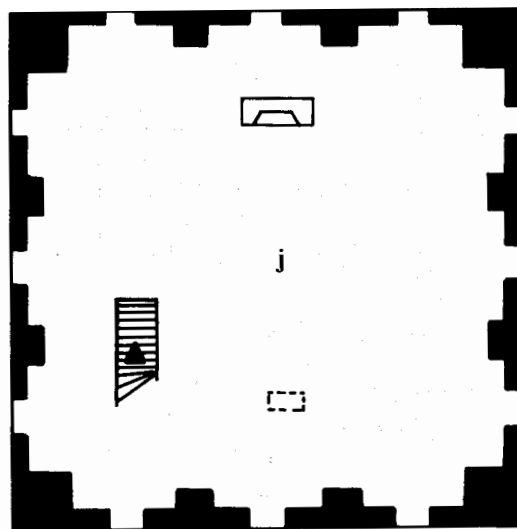
LEVEL 1



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 3



BARAD PERRAS

f. Bedroom. This room was fitted as the bedroom for the son of the lord of the tower but never used. There are ancient and broken pieces of furniture in here such as a bookshelf and wardrobe that were not removed. There is also a fireplace. This room is now used as a sort of mess (a not inappropriate word, really) by the ShirQks of the bukras stationed here. Any number of them may be in here during the day, and most also choose to sleep here rather than with the rabble upstairs. The floor is strewn with mattresses, stools and low tables. Most of the ShirQks carry some plunder, typically coins and trinkets worth 50 + 5-30 sp.

g. Latrine. Few Orcs understand such a concept however, and it is not really in use. A few weapons are stored in here, including bows and arrows.

h. Master's bedchamber. The walls still have the last faded and tatty remains of the red silk which covered them. There are also a few shards of rotten wood around the place. Anyone remaining in the room will soon begin to feel chill, then freezing cold. The Orcs do not use this room as it is the home of the ancient Master's malingering spirit. The spirit cannot manifest itself in any visible or tactile way, but can induce feelings of cold and of fear in anyone here. If the characters persist in staying in this room, they must make a 5th level RR or be struck by an "A" cold critical. They will also be drained 3 points of temp CO per round (no chance to resist). To the left of the fireplace is a secret panel (Very Hard, -20 to spot). It can only be opened by manipulating the catch in a certain way (make a Hard, -10 Pick Lock roll), and is also trapped: when the door is opened, a concealed 7' long counterbalanced weight swings down from the ceiling above this spot delivering a +75 battle-axe attack. This can only be countered with AG bonus and shield, if held (unlikely). Inside is a small square cupboard, bare; actually there is a tiny invisible box containing the Ring of Vaire, which can cast Prayer 4x/day. The only other feature of the room is a large fitted wooden cupboard. In the back of this is a door (concealed on the other side) leading into room #i.

i. Guestroom. It is now used as a storeroom, being close to the front door. There are stacked firewood and torches, sacks of meal, sheets of rough fabric, ropes, some ironware, barrels of drink and salted meats, and so on. Nothing remains from the earlier room, and even the fireplace has been unused. There is a secret door on the wall leading to the Master's bedroom (#h). It is Extremely Hard (-30) to spot from this side, but once discovered can be levered open without too much of a problem.

Level Three: The walls are 11' high again, and the floor is solid wood.

j. The great hall. Its peaked roof rising up to 20' above the center of the floor, forms the upper story. It is not known whether this was the original idea, or whether the builders were paid off before completing the tower after the death of the lord who commissioned it. The only architectural features are the oblong windows, fixed with warped and rotted wooden shutters; a great stone fireplace; the elegant banister surrounding the stairway; and the dumb waiter rising from the kitchens. Now the hall is home to some sixty warrior and scout Scara-hai. Their belongings and sleeping

rolls are littered everywhere and the room resembles a stinking junkyard more than a barracks. Anyone willing to poke through this stuff will find little of value or interest, and has a 30% chance of being exposed to some disease or infection.

4.4 THE TASK

This adventure can either be the follow-up to the previous adventure or a separate, distinct task of its own. It involves the discovery and elimination of a viper's nest of Orcs hiding in an old tower. Depending on the strength of your players' party you can increase or decrease the "toughness" of this adventure, giving them more or less opponents to fight. The adventure can be motivated by desire for revenge or out of simple hatred of Orcs. It could also be because of someone dear to the characters (or someone else who hires them) held captive in the tower, or by the hope of loot in the Orcs' lair.

4.41 STARTING THE CHARACTERS

If this adventure follows on from the previous one, the player characters may start tracking the Orcs from Mar Maliarnin immediately, or may wait, if they need time to heal and get fresh supplies. If they attempt to get help from any official source, they will be ignored and brushed aside.

Alternatively, there are a number of other folk who might be interested in hiring or persuading the characters to undertake this task. One of these is Thanadirian, described in section 4.21. He will accompany the party on their quest. If the player characters come from this area, they may either know someone rumored to have been taken captive by Orcs in Nan Ascarwing, or be hired by a relative of Hir Maliarnin, master of the Winehouse recently massacred by the Scara-hai.

Another way of getting the PCs interested could be to spread rumors of an Orc lair from some other adventurers who have come across it and only barely escaped with their lives. This could be useful to spread plenty of misleading tales about Baltab (for example, if he appeared in two different guises, there could be much confusion). The adventurers may have witnessed the Scara-hai in wolf-form as well.

4.42 AIDS

There are a number of aids available in this adventure. If the players are not using the pre-generated characters supplied in section 2, you may wish to make some of these available as temporary partners/hirelings. This will be useful to boost a weaker party, but the NPCs should not be regarded as less than equals by the player characters.

If the PCs are approached by or encounter Thanadirian, he is likely to join with them and will be of help in providing some healing and defence against Baltab's magical capabilities. He might also be able to provide additional help in the form of information, especially clues from his meditation and Direct Channeling. These can be useful for yourself as GM to give hints to the PCs and lead them in the right direction. Of course, if the characters are argumentative or act disagreeably, Thanadirian may well leave them to their own devices.

The (potentially) greatest aid to the player characters is built into the adventure notes: this is the Tunnel (see 4.31 #3), packed with explosives. This has a rather devastating effect on the tower and in fact on the whole area, shaking it with the force of the confined explosion. Anyone in the tunnel will suffer a +60HCr attack from the blow-back and anyone near the entrance will be (harmlessly) showered with soot and light debris. The effect on the tower is shown by the light shading on the plans. On Level One, the shaded areas are subject to falling masonry and will be choked with rubble. Only two of the Scara-hai in room #c (the prison) will survive, the warriors.

All the female Scara-hai will be killed outright or badly injured and will soon suffocate. A large hole will be blown in the wall of the office (#a), stretching up to the guestroom (#i). Either of these rooms can be climbed into easily. On Level Two, the outer wall will mostly survive although large cracks appear in several places. A large portion of the floor will subside, leaving a gaping hole which anyone coming in or out will have to negotiate. On Level Three, the shock will cause the entire over-hanging section to fall down. This will surround the tower with rubble and squash most of the Orcs on the top floor as the roof suddenly drops eleven feet. If you want to have a greater survival rate for the Scara-hai, you could have just half the overhang fall away, leaving the roof hanging drunkenly lopsided.

The number of survivors is entirely up to you. It is suggested that Baltab and Virsh survive along with up to half the Scara-hai; for a weak party you may wish to make Baltab injured and as few as half a dozen Scara-hai survive unscathed, with another half dozen injured. Careful planning by the player characters can also ensure that they are in the best position to take advantage of the aftermath; e.g., sited in a defensible position with missile weapons.

4.43 OBSTACLES

The strength of the garrison in the tower is the main obstacle to the characters' success. Once they have located the lair, they can plan how best to deal with it. This might involve a number of operations before the tunnel is found, any of which could result in a thorough search of the area by the bukras under the command of Baltab and Virsh.

There are few other natural hazards. As has been mentioned earlier (see sections 3.0 and 3.1), North Ithilien is a relatively mild country. There are no predatory beasts, and the worst that might be encountered is a poisonous snake.

4.44 REWARDS

There is a fair amount of treasure in Barad Perras (assuming the characters don't bury it all in the explosion!), and also some magic items available if they overcome opponents like Baltab. The characters may also, through this adventure, learn of the existence of more Orcs of the Green Claw somewhere in a citadel high in the Ephel Duath, under the control of a sinister and powerful leader with, in all likelihood, a great store of treasure himself.

The characters will also get a bounty from the Gondorian officials if they report their discovery and action (assuming all went well). This should be appropriate to their level, but might typically be, something like 100gp per person.

4.5 ENCOUNTERS

Once again, there is no encounter table for this adventure. The sorts of encounters the player characters will have are really up to them. Thenotes on layout, NPCs etc. should give you a reasonable idea of the likely strategy of the Scara-hai and their leaders once the characters reach the lower slopes of Hallras.

4.51 PRELIMINARY ENCOUNTERS

The earliest encounters could be with either the lookout (see 4.31 #4) or with a returning bukra of Scara-hai. Use the stats given in the first adventure for these Orcs. If any of them are allowed to escape or raise the alarm, the tower will be put on a full watch footing with lookouts on the upper storey and regular patrols for a half mile (or so) around. If the characters are very unfortunate they could have an early encounter with one of the more powerful individuals; perhaps Baltab with his mail, net and club, mounted on the great black mare and accompanied by two bukras.



The preliminary encounters end when the PCs reach the tower and have the chance to investigate it more closely. Once they interfere with anyone or anything this close to the lair, a full scale search for them will be launched with 75% of the Orcs leaving to scour the area. Baltab may even go to the extent of transforming a number of Scara-hai into their wolf-forms, since they then have a better sense of smell (treat this as a Track bonus of 60).

4.52 SPECIFIC ENCOUNTERS

These encounters occur when the characters enter the tunnel or the tower, or if their location is discovered by the Scara-hai. In the latter case, Baltab will personally lead an attempt to capture or kill the party, assisted by four bukras, all equipped with nets in addition to their usual weapons. If things go badly, Baltab will retreat and leave the Orcs to fend for themselves. He may also send for assistance from the citadel, but this will take some time. His other option is to mount a mass raid against the party (if they defeat the attempt to capture them), transforming all the Scara-hai into wolf-creatures. This could be deadly!

There are a few specific encounters mentioned in the text, including two undead spirits. The Corpse Candle in the side tunnel (4.3, #3) is noted on the Master Beast Table. The ghost in the tower's master bedchamber (4.3, #6h) is an immaterial spirit which is only affected by *Neutralize Curse* and *Dispel Curse* spells.

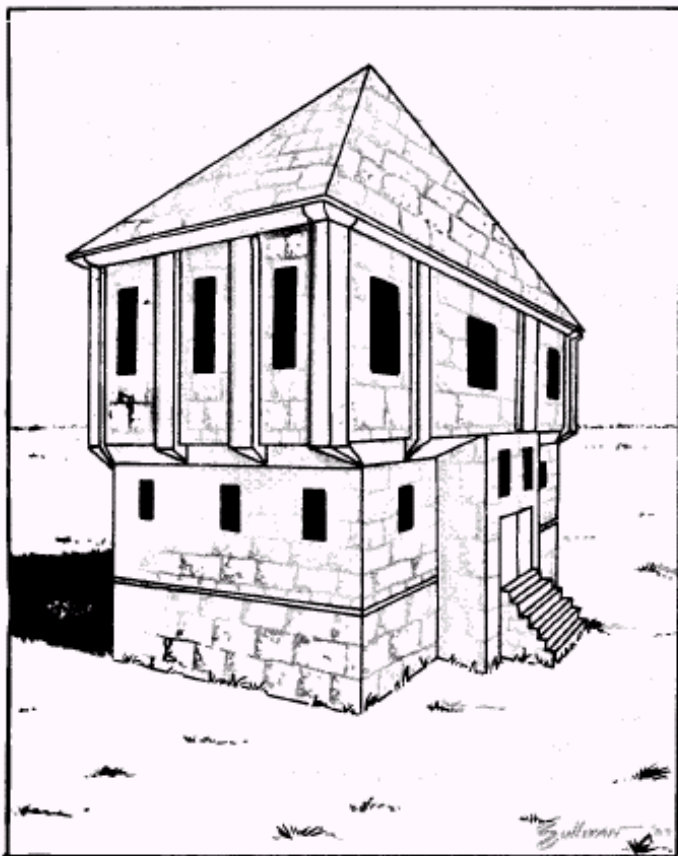
NPCS IN TROUBLE AT LITTLEHORN

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	Mov/ Man	Notes
Thanadrian	6	44	No	10	N	N	20ss	50cp	20	Silvan Elf Animist
ST52,AG61,CO57,IG99,IT90,PR86,AP84. PP6 (or more).										
Baltab	5	107	CH	5	N	N	93net	-10		Half-troll Warrior
			No	25*	N	N	83cl	10		
ST90,AG76,CO77,IG95,IT69,PR76,AP15. PP10 +5 mail *Shield Spell.										
Virsh	5	75	RI	15*	N	N	40ms	0		Scara-hai Scout

5.0 THE GATES OF MORDOR

Where the *Ephel Du'ath* (S. "outer fences of dark shadow") meet the *Ered Lithui* (S. "ashy mountains") lies the plain of Udiin: the great gateway into Mordor. A gigantic staging area, Udiin is a craterlike plateau, ringed by jagged peaks. To the north lies Cirith Gorgor, the pass which leads out onto the plain of Morannon, guarded by the Towers of the Teeth. To the south is Carach Angren, the inner gateway onto the dread plain of Gorgoroth. And overlooking this entire grim scene is the Citadel of Durthang. Though originally built by the Dunedain of Condor after the fall of Sauron to keep evil things from re-entering Mordor, it has been abandoned and inhabited by the very creatures the Gondorians wished to keep out.

This third adventure involves the player characters with an evil, scheming master of deceit who has been planning to strike a major blow against Condor on behalf of Sauron, the Necromancer. Gaurhir has been planning the strike for many years, recruiting and breeding a new tribe of Orcs, the Scara-hai. Now the time is ripe, and his plans have come to fruition. His stature has enabled him to deal with other Orc tribes of the Morgai and the Ephel Duath and their hordes are even now marching on the city and the pass of Minas Ithil.



Naturally, Condor's watch on Mordor is not so sleepy that the massing of Orc tribes has gone unnoticed. But the Royal Army is little suited to large offensive maneuvers at the moment, and does not imagine that any rabble of Orcs could seriously pose a threat to their defenses. Just to be on the safe side, all leave has been cancelled and the garrisons are at maximum strength. The movement of civilians has been restricted in the Minas Ithil/Cirith Ungol area and there are frequent patrols keeping an eye on the situation.

If the characters have played the previous adventure, they will know that there are some strange Orcs with a sorcerous leader (alternatively they can be told this by a vengeful Elf, Thanadrian), laired in a tower high in the Mountains of Shadow. Even if the characters have not heard of the news in Minas Ithil, they should realize the evil threat poised on the borders of Condor and be willing to take it on.

5.1 THE TALE OF GAURHIR, MASTER OF DURTHANG

Much of the tale of Gaurhir is told in the section on the Scara-hai. His is an ancient history, for Gaurhir is an immortal, a demonic werewolf and a servant of Sauron in the First and Second Ages. When his mortal form was slain at the end of the Second Age it took him time, as it did Sauron, to regenerate a new body and relearn his old skill and power. Now he is a force to be reckoned with, a force for evil.

Gaurhir has reoccupied the tower of *Durthang* (S. "Dark Oppression"), one of the citadels originally constructed by Condor at the beginning of the Third Age. Like its more famous sister-fortress at Cirith Ungol and the Morannon Gate, Durthang was designed to monitor the interior of Mordor and prevent any renewed activity there. However, after the plague in the Mid-Third Age these structures were abandoned and eventually became the nests of foul creatures. Evil lieutenants of the Dark Lord set up garrisons there in preparation for Sauron's long-range scheme.

Gaurhir's command here is no exception. Supplied with aid from Dol Guldur he has repaired and fortified the decaying structure, and his orkish miners delved caves far beneath the original foundations of the Tower. It was there that he discovered the *Guldraugir* (S. "jewel of wolf-sorcery") an ancient gem, luminous green in color, a device of direst necromancy.

This jewel has enabled him to construct a hideous monstrosity, a creature of stone and metal shaped as a wolf, the Angdraug. When Gaurhir uses the device, he can make the Angdraug speak, see through its crystal eyes, hear with its iron ears and feel with its stone pads. The Angdraug can even be set in motion, although it is normally carried in a great cart. The Angdraug has become the unifier of the Orc tribes and leads them into the attack on Condor's tower and walled city. Many Scara-hai have also been sent to the battle under the leadership of a half-orc trained in the ways of enchantment by Gaurhir. Soon they will be joined by the Fha-Korlash, chieftain of the Orcs of the Green Claw, who ever now is receiving his last, secret instructions from Gaurhir.

However, not all his master's plans have followed their predetermined routes. The werewolf sent a force of Scara-hai over the "impassable" Ephel Duath, constructing a bridge over a chasm in the only cleft, *Cirith Helkond* (S. "Ice-stone Pass"). They were commanded by a half-troll warrior also trained in sorcery, and took up residence in an abandoned tower below Hallras, a great mountain in the range forming Mordor's ancient boundary. They have since been eliminated and Gaurhir has an undefended flank. He sits secure in Durthang and gloats over the imminent defeat of the Gondorian guard and the installing of evil commanders in another citadel of Mordor, in preparation for his master's eventual return.

5.2 THE NPCS

There are fewer NPCs in this adventure. The player characters instead must pit their wits and skill against a variety of natural and supernatural agencies. These are more fully described in the Encounters section (5.5). Some of the Scara-hai are described in the first two adventures: see sections 3.2, 4.2 and the section on Scara-hai.

5.21 GAURHIR

Gaurhir is a werewolf, an immortal, evil beast descended from the lesser Maiar seduced by Morgoth and Sauron at the first sundering of good and evil. He can assume either man or wolf form at will, the transformation taking but a single round. He "died" at the end of the Second Age but his spirit has since regenerated and he now has the learning equivalent to a 9th level human Mage in addition to his awesome power for destruction as a wolf. He has travelled widely, spending many years under the direct command of Sauron the Necromancer in Mirkwood's Dol Guldur. He also dwelled in Khand and among the Orcs of the southeastern Ephel Duath, and brought about the Scara-hai as is explained in their own tale. Other portions of his history are unknown.

In Mannish form, Gaurhir is normally 7' tall with short grey hair and a lined face. However, he can adapt this appearance moderately to adopt various disguises, shortening himself to as little as 6' and assuming a very appealing countenance (APP 101). He wears robes of silver-grey stitched with metallic green runes in an arcane script not known in northwestern Middle-earth. These robes give him a bonus of +25 to DB and RR against Essence magic. He also wields a staff of enchanted hollow bronze. This can be used as a normal quarterstaff (i.e. as a two-handed weapon), but has a more useful purpose. The staff is a x4 PP multiplier and 2/day can cast Lines of Fire. This special spell draws a line up to 25' long (on any shape or design) upon any surface, small flames (up to 6" high) dancing along the line. At any time the small flames can be commanded to leap into a Wall of Fire. The small flames last as long as the caster concentrates + 1 minute/level. The Wall lasts for 1 round/level. When the staff is used in combat, it does a secondary Heat critical (i.e. if a "C" or better critical result is obtained, a Heat critical of two grades lower is also delivered).

In wolf form, Gaurhir grows in size and becomes even stronger. His mere presence causes those in sight of him to make a RR against a 5th level Fear attack. A failure of 1-50 results in the viewer fleeing in terror. A failure of 51-100 means the victim either faints or is frozen in place for 1-10 rounds. Anyone failing by 101+ dies of a heart attack and brain seizure. His hide is tougher than leather and his great fangs are capable of terrible damage. He can also run, turn and jump extremely well.

Gaurhir's one weakness is the herb Aconite (see the notes on Scara-hai). Although it is unlikely in the extreme that player characters could rub the herb on his magical skin (a certain way of slaying his mortal form), an arrow of ashwood (preferably mountain ash or rowan) steeped in a concoction of the herb should be treated as an Arrow of Slaying for the purpose of determining criticals against the werewolf. Of course, not everyone will know this...and even should they find out, the PCs still have to make the arrow and fire it well.

Notable Skills: *Track 75, Perception 60, Influence 50, Use Items 50, Read Runes 50. Languages: Morbeth 5, Westron 5, Sindarin 4, Quenya 4, Orkkh 4, any other human tongue 3. Spell Lists: Essence's Ways, Ice Law, Living Change, Lofty Bridge, Spirit Mastery. Base Spells +10, Directed Spells +50.*

5.22 THE FHA-KORLASH

The *Fha-Korlash* (Or. "Great Jaw") is the leader of the Orcs of the Green Claw. He foregoes any other name when he assumes the title. Unlike other tribes where violent struggle is the norm for finding a new chieftain, Gaurhir has such control over the Scara-hai that he practically appoints the Fha-Korlash. There is still a ritual fight, either against the old chief or another contender.

The chieftain is known by his weapons and by his bald, green-tattooed head. The weapon he wields is also a tribal totem, a great cleaver. The weapon can be used either with one or two hands. Used one-handed it should be treated as a broadsword; in two hands like a halberd. The blade is often treated with Asgurath poison and has a non-magical +10 bonus owing the superior metal of its construction. He also wears two peculiar bracers, armbands covering the forearms and wrists, with long claw-like spikes extending over the back of the hand. When the fist is clenched, this forms a fearsome tearing or punching weapon. They are made of extremely tough steel and should be treated as +10 daggers for him to fight with if otherwise unarmed, striking twice per round. The bracers are enchanted: they give +10 bonus to DB and RRs against directed spells, also negating 50% of arm criticals. They are decorated with a design in green enamel.

The present Fha-Korlash has held his position for some five years and is a skilled warrior, although he has few other skills. He relies heavily on the guidance of the werewolf.

Notable Skills: *Perception 45, Climb 41, Stalk/Hide 35, Knowledge 35, Leadership 30, Ambush 25. Languages: Morbeth 5, Orkish/Scarabit 4, Westron 4.*

5.23 THANADIRIAN

The Silvan Elf from the recently-torched village of Firimas may also appear in this adventure to help the characters. He is described in section 4.21.

5.3 LAYOUT OF DURTHANG AND THE NORTHERN EPHEL DUATH

The northern *Ephel Duath* (S. "Mountains of Shadow") is an inhospitable and impassable range of mountains. The land is over 5600' reaching to peaks of 7200' and more. There is often snow year-round in many places as the shadows from which the mountains take their name keep off the warm sun that makes Ithilien such a pleasant country. Clouds, fog and smokes seeping from nameless sources all contribute to the gloom and dismal atmosphere of the place. The mountains are home to few living creatures, most of them inimical, such as the rarely seen dragon-birds or fell beasts, and the spiderlings bred by Shelob. The underlying rock formations show much volcanic activity eons past; there are also slates and sandstones between the granites and igneous rocks.

5.31 FEATURES OF THE NORTHERN EPHEL DUATH

The numbers keying the features described below can be found on the Area Map.

1. Durthang. The tower is described in section 5.32.

2. Imlad Lechil (S. “Valley of Flames”). The Imlad Lechil is a dire and dangerous place. It is unlikely that anyone untrained in climbing who attempts to pass through it will come out alive, such are the difficulties to be encountered here, not least of which is the eternal problem of becoming lost in a wasteland of thin air mixed with noxious vapors. However, because the Valley seems the most natural route (if there is such a thing) to Durthang, the player characters may well want to venture this way.

The Valley may be roughly divided into two portions: the approaches and the plateau. The approaches include the vales formed by the headwaters of Sir Ascarwing and the slopes of Hallras (see 4.3). There are a few very faint tracks made by mountain goats in this area which may be followed, but the characters are unlikely to be as nimble as wild goats. The going is hard in the most favorable weather, and very difficult in the worst the mountains can offer. During six months of the year these higher slopes are covered with snow and ice. The broken rocks poke through with vicious, jagged edges, often disintegrating into slides of scree treacherously unstable under foot. There are very few hospitable places to stop and rest and travellers will be scrambling more than walking. Every party member should make a MM Roll every hour and the rate of progress taken as the slowest person; adjust results from a basic 100 = 1 mile per hour speed. The only things that grow hereabouts are some thorny shrubs and tufts of alpine grass.

If the approaches are difficult, the plateau is just plain absurd. The plateau is what the Valley is named for; one of the most dangerous hazards are the gouts of the flame that spout seemingly from the very rocks themselves. In a cold and wild place less hospitable than the surface of the moon, where freezing winds pluck at coats and cloaks, where smoke makes the eyes gritty and fog obscures a hand in front of a face, nothing less evil than the land itself dares to tread. Anything that moves is an enemy: there are clacking spiders wandering far abroad from Torech Ungol, plagues of black and dusty flies branded with the Lidless Eye, and fell beasts of the air. The ground is pitted with holes and craters; the way is interminably blocked by chasms and sheer rock faces. The turning and twisting route a party must take to penetrate the plateau reduces their effective speed to (mile forward per hour at most; as before, a MM roll must be made every hour. Naturally, this is assuming the characters are not lost. Anyone relying on observation of the stars, for example, will have much trouble seeing through the clouds of smoke and mist which hang like a pall over the plateau. Even lodestones are liable to go haywire in the presence of some of the rocks to be found here.

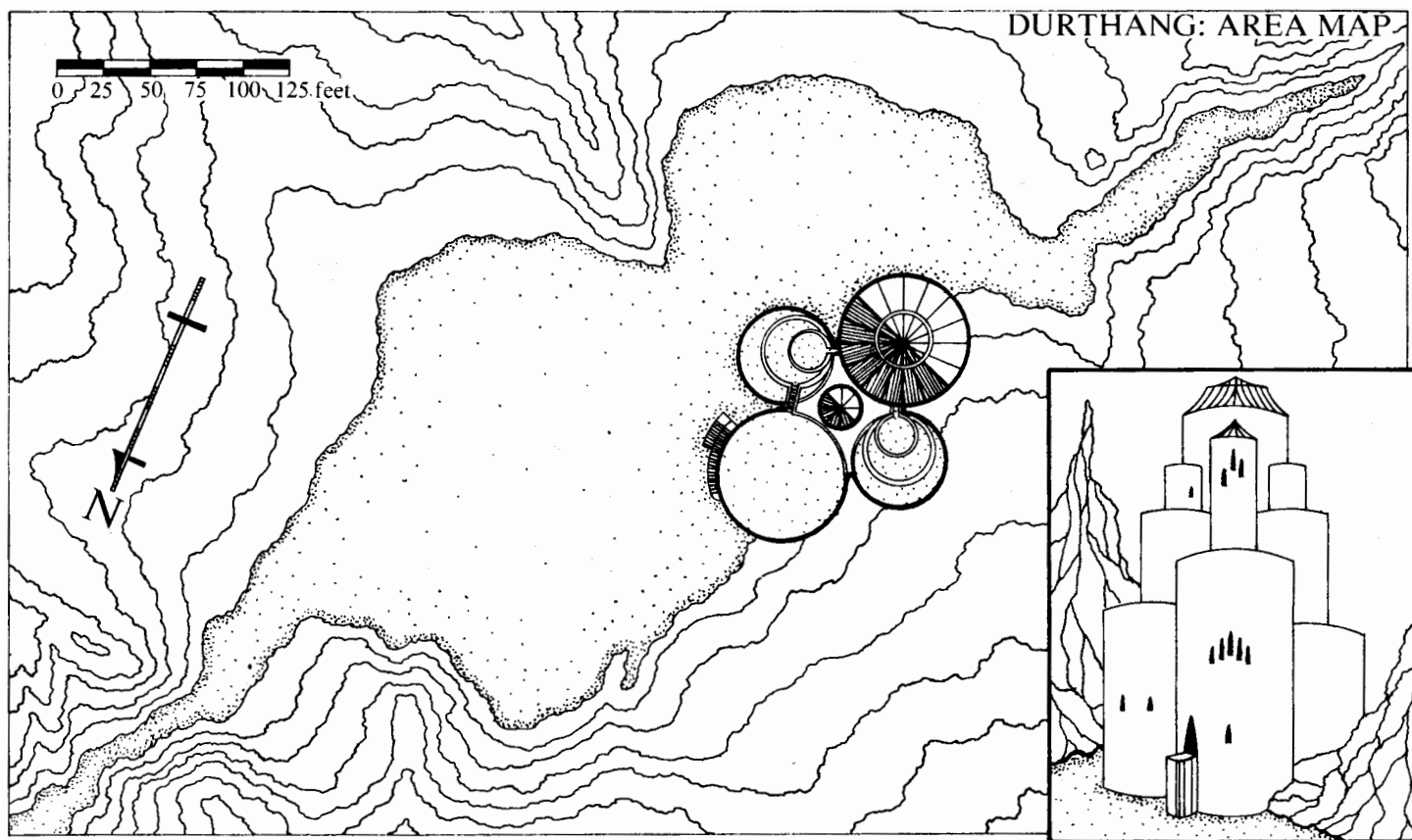
3. Cirith Helkond (S. “Ice-stone Pass”). Cirith Helkond is a narrow and tortuous path through the Ephel Duath. Much of it is a natural shelf or shoulder on the mountainside but this is split by a mighty chasm making the pass useless; until a year ago, that is. The steep sides of Hallras and its neighbor *Gorencaihei* (S. “Terrible Ice Jaws”) are unclimbable as they are covered with scree, frost-crumbled rock, ice and snow. There is always a risk of avalanches in the winter and rock or mud slides in the summer when a warm spell melts the ice under the surface holding everything together. Still, normal (mountain) rate movement is possible for most of the way.

GAURHIR



When Gaurhir sought to plant a lair of Scara-hai in Ithilien he discovered the abandoned tower of Barad Perras (#4). Realising the impossibility of crossing Imlad Lechil on a regular basis, he examined Cirith Helkond and found it would be suitable — if only the great ravine could be spanned. Long days he toiled, and constructed a bridge of ice to span the chasm, *Helkarianf Iethar* (S. “Ice Bridge Across the Abyss”). Then the Scara-hai could traverse the length of Cirith Helkond with impunity. They have even erected marker stones every 2 miles (a standard unit of orkish length called a *zbysla*). The bridge is never in danger of melting as it is 5825’ high and permanently in shadow from one or other mountain. It is a simple flat arch just 15’ wide, with no barrier. On either side of it is a standing stone of polished obsidian, like a rough, squat cylinder, inscribed with three orkish words “*kurtesh dosh vienda*”. This is a charm of sure-footedness which, when said while the speaker is touching the stone, gives 5 rounds of +50 to MM: plenty of time to cross the 50’ bridge. The bridge can support 2000lbs of weight if spread.

The path from the pass continues northeast up the valley on whose opposite side the road south from Durthang leads to the plain of Gorgoroth. At one point where it dips back towards Hallras, the path skirts a shallow hollow with a tarn in the bottom. By this round, still, black lake is a mounted cistern, about 20’ from the edge of the water. The cistern is of orkish design and normally has water in it. However, should the cistern be frozen and the characters investigate the lake, they are in for a surprise, for a small kraken lives there and will seize anyone within 10’ of the shore with its sinuous tentacles. This is the reason for the cistern being there!



5.32 LAYOUT OF THE TOWER AND ORC CAVERNS OF DURTHANG

The tower of Durthang is reached by climbing a steep, switch-backed mountain road. A sudden precipice drop on one side to the shadowed valleys of the Ephel Ddath, while the vertical mass of the mountains confines the other. The road ends in the high rocky crevice where Durthang grips the earth. The tower was sculpted from the stone indigenous to the area; its rusting iron spire surpasses the height of **200** feet, while its foundations interlock with the caverns that riddle the peaks. The rocks in this portion of the mountains are rich in copper ore, lending them the green hue; in times past, Sauron had Orcs and slaves mine the copper in the richer veins.

The foot of the tower stands in a barren, narrow valley. It is used by the Scara-hai for musters, combat practice, and other operations unsuited to the restricted caverns in the cliff. The jagged rocks of the cliff hide a crack, the main entrance to the caverns. An iron door secured by a bar and two locks, and guarded by three Scara-hai further protects the concealed entrance.

The mountain road leading to Durthang is overlooked by the mouths of empty caves where thousands of Orcs once dwelt. Most of these have been destroyed by the conquering Ddnedain, their entrances half-filled with rubble. A few were occupied by the Scara-hai, but are now vacant. A strong defensive wall jointed to a stone tower guarded the foot of the road. It was destroyed by the Gondorians; now there is no trace of the gate, and a simple ring of stonework marks the location of the tower.

THE TOWER

- 1. Entrance Stair.** Worn blocks of stone lead up to the iron portal of Durthang; no railing guards the edge. The door, etched with the symbol of the Lidless Eye, is secured by a magical lock rather than a mechanical one. Originally, a word of Opening was the only way to achieve entry. Gaurhir has altered the spell; tracing the Lidless Eye six times with index finger will open the door. It can be opened from the inside by turning the knob protruding from the opposite wall.
- 2. Battle Corridor.** Durthang was built to be more a retreat and command centre than a defensive site, but the tactics of defense were still consulted in its design. The corridor curves around the base of the foremost tower and is segmented by four massive portcullis, each controlled from the guardroom by a simple counterweight.
- 3. Guardroom.** Two bukras normally man the room, but so many of the Scara-hai are currently absent that just four scouts hold the post (2 1st level, 2 2nd level), under the control of a Shiuk. Two small tables, stools, benches, torches on the walls, and a chest with dice, food, and ale furnish the space.
- 4. Watchpost.** Arrow slits overlooking the battle corridor allow defenders to pepper an attacking force with missile fire.
- 5. Weaving Room.** A workshop where canvas, cloth, and rope are produced, the room holds several spinning and weaving machines constructed from wood and copper. All are hand-powered. At any time, **6-10** Scara-hai will be working here, usually the older males and females with a few young males. One corner of the room shelters a great dyeing vat (6' deep and 8' across); rickety wooden steps lead up to its lip. Any young males (1st level) will be armed with short swords and will attack intruders on sight.
- 6. Smithy.** Hot, humid fumes drench the air and stain the walls. Three Scara-hai smiths (treat as 2nd level warriors) work in rotation, each assisted by **2-4** apprentices (1st level warriors). Three forges accompanied by cooling baths, anvils, bellows, tools, bins of charcoal, and racks of metal ingots fill the room. In addition to iron, steel, and copper, some bronze is used for the detailed work occasionally found on weapons and armor.
- 7. Metalworking Room.** Several Orcs finish the fine work on items produced by the smiths: putting an edge on swords and claws with a large selection of grindwheels; riveting utensils together; putting hinges and locks together; making chainmail and chains; and decorating a few items for special use. There are **5-9** workers here, half of whom will be young males (1st level warriors) armed with hammers or short swords.

- C) Vapors. The change in atmosphere listed can be very sudden (always so in the case of flames) or more insidious and creeping. Flames affect 1-6 characters at random as a $+30$ Ball Attack, with the usual target modifiers (in favor of the characters) applicable and a maximum "C" critical. Fog simply cuts vision down to 10-100 feet and persists for 1-6 miles; if additional fog or smoke is encountered in this time, vision is reduced by a factor of 10 each time. Smoke reduces vision to 50-500 feet and also causes the eyes to smart: everyone suffers a reduction by half of their Perception bonus and must make a 2nd level RR or have the condition persist for 48 hours. The smoke typically only lasts for 1-3 miles, and sometimes even less. It carries no particular smell and is at different times acrid, bitter, sour and sooty.
- D) Event. The various events given in the table happen some time during the following 2-mile stretch rather than at the point rolled. This gives your players the impression nothing has happened! A Fall may mean (50%) someone in the party has fallen from the path, or fallen over, or down a hole or crevasse. An immediate MM Fumble roll should be made to determine any damage done, even if the person was roped to another; then the other characters must see how they can help the faller back up. Alternatively (50%) it may mean a fall of rocks, mud or snow which either falls on the party or before them blocking their way forward until they can get over or around it. Falls on the party should be treated as $+30$ LCr attacks. If someone makes an Easy ($+20$) Perception roll, the fall is spotted and normal DBs can be subtracted from the attack. If the party becomes Lost don't tell them for some time (perhaps allow them a Perception check next encounter roll to see if they notice). If they fail to find their way again before rolling another Lost result they will be permanently lost in the mountains unable to retrace their steps. Spikes are a special event; 1-3 people in the party slip on or climb over rough, spiky rock which tears something, possibly tearing it away (e.g. a strap holding a pack, weapon or shield). Such an item would be lost unless the characters find some way to recover it.
- E) Nothing. The characters encounter nothing special; however you may wish to have some other sighting or event (something flies overhead, an eerie noise is heard, the temperature/weather changes etc.).

5.52 ENCOUNTERS IN DURTHANG

Encounters should be rolled for every time a new area/level is entered.

- A) Scara-hai. Some Scara-hai may be encountered wandering around the caverns. You may wish to make a note of the total number of Scara-hai in the complex before the arrival of the characters, then delete any encountered and killed from this total and from their appropriate locations. Guards will be either two warriors from a bukra or the whole bukra. In the latter case one or both the scouts will immediately leave to raise the alarm, while the others engage the party. Messengers are runners carrying orders or information; typically this will be a 1st or 2nd level scout with $+5/+10$ MM bonus. Messengers almost always carry messages by word of mouth, being trained to improve their memory. Servants will be 1st level young males or females. They wear no armor and may have a club (or equivalent) to fight, but will never attack, only defending themselves. They are easily cowed.
- B) Lapidary Effects. These are peculiar effects which occur through a combination of the rock from which the cliff and tower are made, and the necromantic use to which Durthang was put for hundreds of years. This type of stone, which is unknown elsewhere and has no name in any tongue of the Free

Peoples, can produce external manifestations in order to protect the evil that dwells here. The rock may be considered semi-sentient; it receives impressions from the thoughts and actions of any intruders and produces a variety of effects to scare or drive them off. Disorientation simply acts to confuse anyone in the party. Everyone must make a 4th level RR (counts as Essence magic); failure means they are convinced that everyone else is going in the wrong/the other direction (even to the extent that they think up is down on a stairway). The disorientation passes when they leave the area. RRs should be made in secret! Any character being Disoriented once has a -50 penalty on subsequent RRs. Fall indicates a rockfall or deadfall; both are illusory (equivalent to a Phantasm spell): the first affects a 10' radius area attacking all within it as a $+30$ LCr; the deadfall traps a single victim with a $+80$ HCr attack. Once the nature of Falls have been determined, this encounter roll should be treated as Nothing. You may wish to make this encounter a real rockfall in the disused mines (5.32). A Ghost is conjured up from the imagination of the characters by the stone and walks out from it. It will either (50%) be a greenish, vaporous likeness of someone known to be dead by the characters, with the combined effect of a Cool Air spell around it and a Wall of Cold on anything touching or passing through it; or (50%) be a horde of ghouls and skeletons apparently issuing from a secret door, requiring a 7th level Fear RR to avoid being stunned for one round. If two or more people resist, the horde will disappear if they strike at it with weapons. If only one person resists (or no-one), the party is likely to be overwhelmed and captured, so long as they believe the illusion. Heat is no illusion but a real ability of the rock to warm itself at the rate of 5°F per round, to a maximum of 250°F .

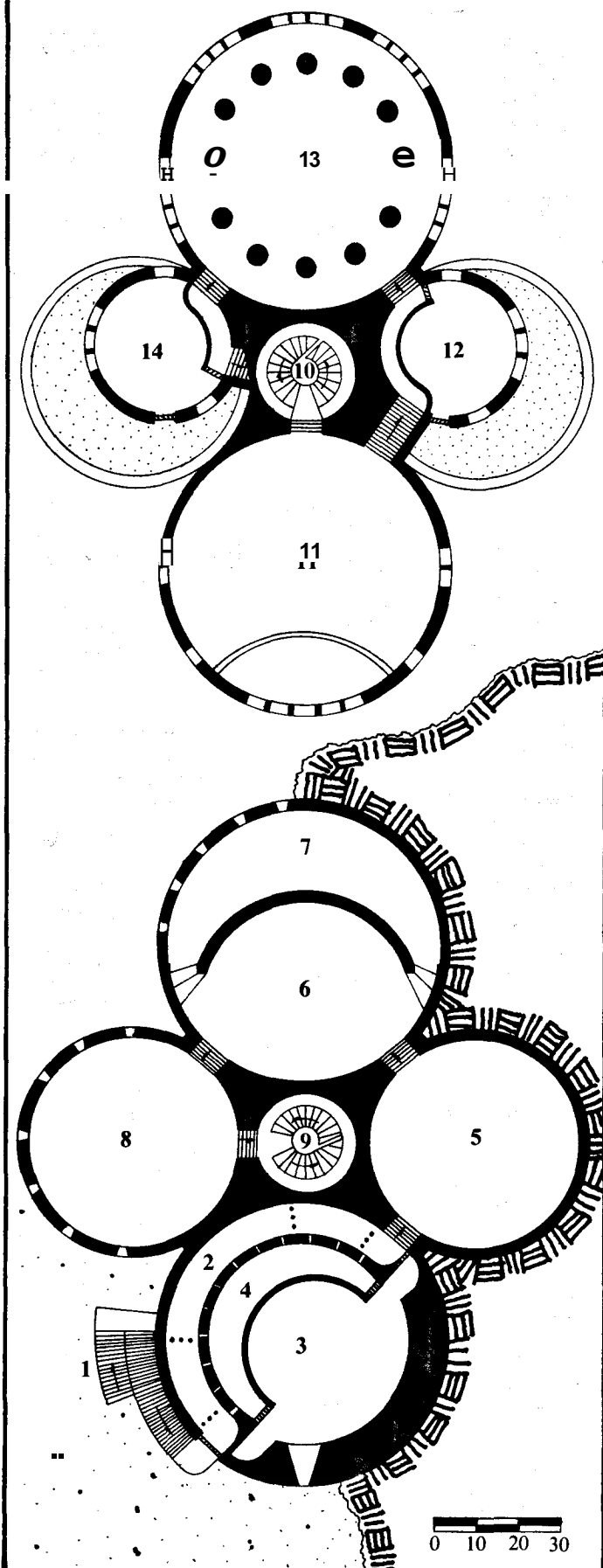
- C) Load. A load is something temporarily left by the Scara-hai. This might be (80%) a bundle of possessions, a sack of food (or what the Orcs call food), firewood, torches, other supplies; or (20%) something special such as a prisoner, wolfskins, loot and so on. The load might contain something useful for the player characters or might simply waste their time.
- D) Special. A special encounter can be either good or bad for the party (and if it's bad, it could be very bad). Typically this might be one of the more powerful opponents in the adventure (Gaurhir or the Fha-Korlash, with or without guards); an accident (someone tripping over painfully, a roof support collapsing, a piece of equipment breaking etc.); some Scara-hai in wolf-form going off hunting; or a more fortuitous event such as meeting an escaped prisoner from the Orc caverns (no-one ever escapes from the tower), the chance discovery of a secret door when they see someone using it, and so on.

6.0 THE SCARA-HAI

The Scara-hai are a small tribe of Orcs who have developed certain unique racial characteristics and also, through the influence of arcane magic, have other special abilities.

Originally, the Scara-hai dwelt in the far southeast of Mordor, in the mountains where the Ephel Dath borders Khand. These far lands were never pacified by Condor after Sauron was overcome and many dark practises continued there that few others knew of. An ancient (and ageless) servant of Sauron, Gaurhir, found the Orcs and twisted them to his own purpose, devoting their every effort to the worship and admiration of the fell beasts known as Wargs. Through his own learnings and abilities, Gaurhir found a way to enchant wolf hides so that when the Scara-hai don them they can assume a form part-Warg, part-Orc.

DURTHANG: THE TOWER



8. Woodworking Rooms. This room is fitted out with benches, stores of wood and timber, racks of unusual Orcish-style carpentry tools, and several half-finished items (from doors to shields, bowls to weapon hafts). The 4-8 workers are half young, half old males.

9. Stairhall. An iron stairway spirals in a helix from the caverns below the tower to the topmost chamber where Gaurhir makes his lair. One floor interrupts the unbroken sweep of the walls where the door from the woodworking room connects the two chambers, but small, rail-less balconies are the only links between the stairway and the other chambers.

10. Stairhall. An upper portion of #9.

11. Chamber of Initiation. A high, vaulted ceiling hovers over the sorcerous rituals that occur in the chamber. The most common is the rite of initiation into 'wolf-hood' for young Scara-hai about to be appointed to a bukra. The walls are hung with wolfskins and the lamps are maintained with tallow oil boiled from the bodies of the Orcs' victims. An evil stench permeates the room; the floor is deeply etched with arcane designs, the marks stained with blood and muck. The ceremony necessary to enchant the Scara-hai and their skins for transformation is also performed here, although the number of Scara-hai, if too large, may force this ritual outside. Three monstrous bowls (36" diameter, 12" deep) occupy the dais at one end of the room. The rightmost bowl is wrought of copper, chased with gold, and set with emeralds and malachite; the leftmost of bronze, etched with silver, and set with amethysts and amber; the center of iron, engraved with mithril, and set with fire opals and onyx (each worth 150gp or more). All feel unclean to those touching them.

12. Room of Karg-Kragor. A layer of tanned hides covers the interior surface of the iron door. A bed, a wardrobe for armor, weapons and clothing, and a chest for other personal effects rest against the inner wall. In the center of the room are a table, stools, a small gong to summon servants, and a cleared space for 'entertainments'. The lieutenants typically entertain themselves with torture and cruel games. Another door opens out to a large terrace. There is only one Karg-Kragor in the complex at the moment (occupying this room), the other (#14) is either dead or away with the forces. The typical wealth of each is 10gp plus 1-10 gp in assorted coins, trinkets and baubles.

13. Council Chamber. A massive stone table squats within the ring of columns. Dust obscures its harsh surface, since Gaurhir rarely requests council from anyone.

14. Room of Karg-Kragor. Same as #12, except this room is currently unoccupied.

15. Stairhall. An upper portion of #9.

16. Hall. A pair of staircases climb the inner wall. Double iron doors lead into the prison.

17. Prison. Captives, sealed inside webs of leather and chain, hang suspended from the ceiling. There are thirty here, dangling at different heights. (Some are suspended upside down. A complex panel of levers and wheels is used to manipulate the chains; each has a pulley system to assist in raising and lowering it, and a clamp to fix it in place. Many prisoners are close to death or insanity. Five can still walk and, perhaps talk, but they are shattered by their experience. They include three patrolmen from Cirith Ungol, a guard from North Ithilien, and an Arthedan knight lost near the Morannon.

18. Chamber of the Angdraug. A tooth-shaped piece of green rock on a low plinth occupies the center of the room. The rock is a 16" cube. Upon the utterance of a command word, the plinth rises from the ground until it is a pedestal 3' high and a section of the wall becomes translucent like thick green glass. When two hands are placed on the stone, a person sees in this window the scene before the Angdraug's eyes; the other senses of hearing, touch, taste, and smell are also conveyed to the operator, who can control the Angdraug's actions. Embedded deep in its animated heart is a sister-stone to this one. If either is destroyed, the other ceases to function. (There is a 30% chance that Gaurhir will be in this room; if so, he will be operating the Angdraug.) No windows other than the sorcerous one used to control the Angdraug pierce the stone walls, but a door opens onto the windswept terrace often used as a landing platform by fell beasts.

19. Room of the Fha-Korlash. Opulent by Orcish standards, the room is entered through a leather curtain that hangs just inside the iron door. If it is not carefully and precisely lifted, intruders will be brushed with spikes coated by uraana. (Level 3 poison, victim virtually incapacitated by double vision for 2-4 hours. RR failure of 01-50 leaves victim at -75; failure of +51, victim at -100.) If any skin other than the face is unprotected, the needles will automatically puncture and deliver their poison. Otherwise: light clothing 80%, heavy clothing 50%, leather clothing or armor 20%.

Furnishings of iron and copper rest on the animal hides that carpet the room. A bronze water vat with spigot, regarded by the chieftain as the height of luxury and often filled with ale or wine, sits next to the terrace door. The theme of the claw adorns many items in the room: the furniture legs, the eating and drinking vessels, the chieftain's clothing, and the stand that holds his great cleaver. When the cleaver is in place, the stand can be operated as a secret door (extremely hard, -30, to spot); it raises a 6' x 4' section of floor to reveal a sizeable hoard of plundered gold and silver (700gp. 1580sp. 2070bp, and eight items worth 50-100 gp each) and an assortment of other treasures Gaurhir has allowed the Fha-Korlash to keep.

Two female Scara-hai are chained to one corner of the bed; three human captives from Gondor are secured to the terrace wall outside. The Gondorians have been cruelly tortured.

20. Terrace.

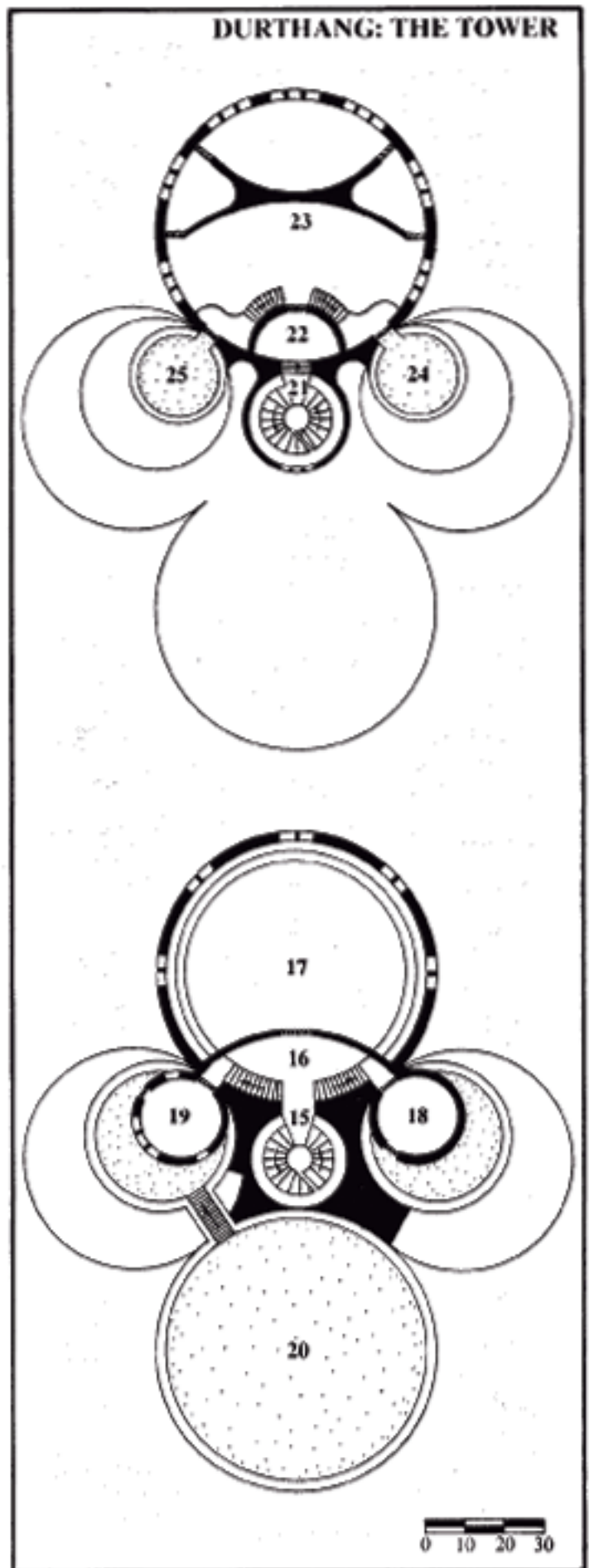
21. Stairhall. An upper portion of #9.

22. Foyer. This topmost level of the tower is gained after climbing a seemingly interminable spiral stair. There is no door between the stairhall and the foyer. An invisible barrier, like that Sauron placed by the Silent Watchers at Cirith Ungol, bars the way. Other than Gaurhir and his invited guests, only those making a 15th level RR (against Essence magic) can pass the barrier. Should anyone pierce the barrier, Gaurhir will be aware of the fact regardless of his location.

23. Gaurhir's Suite. Gaurhir has no servants, for he trusts none. He leaves his rooms to feed, consuming live prey (typically prisoners or Ocs), and to issue commands to the Angdraug or the Scara-hai commanders. Violet and black drapes hang against the green-tinted walls of the suite. Magical lights shed emerald and amethystine glows on the thick furs carpeting the floor and the dark wooden furniture. A sumptuous bed dominates the back room where iron shutters darken the windows by day when Gaurhir sleeps. A large chest near the bed contains gloves, shirts, footwear, and headgear, but no cloaks or robes. A tall cabinet holds several complete costumes from a wide selection of cultures. Gaurhir dons these disguises to infiltrate societies and learn military and political secrets. A huge desk sits in the front room along with overstuffed chairs and footstools. The desk drawers overflow with magical scrolls and manuscripts. Several glass-doored cabinets contain maps, notebooks, magical substances and sorcerous aids. Staircases lead up to two doors that open onto terraces. Treasures here are at your discretion.

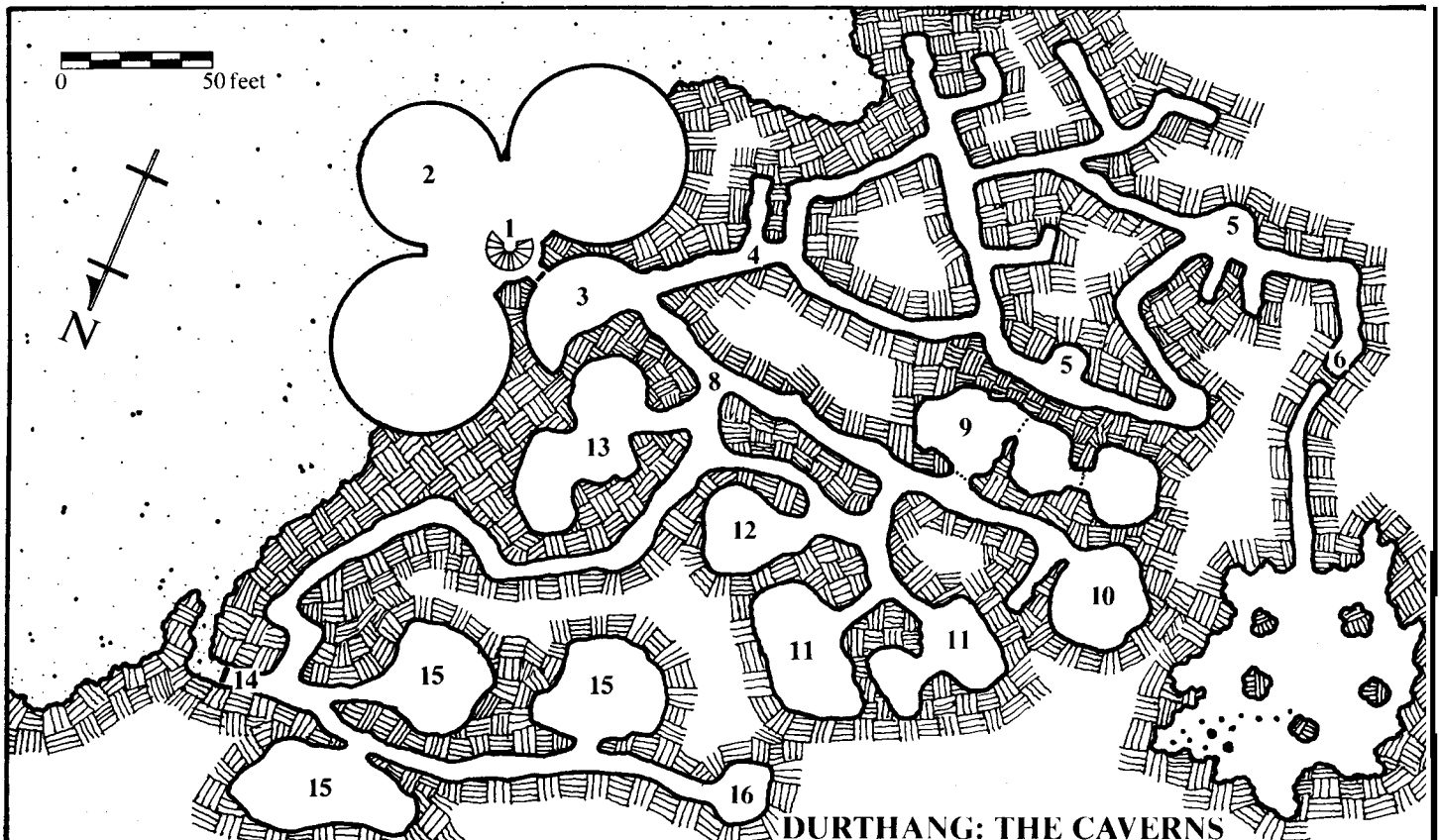
24. Terrace.

25. Terrace.



THE CAVERNS

1. **Spiral Stair.** These stairs connect the tower to the Orc caverns beneath it.
2. **cellars.** The Angdraug was constructed in this large, echoing chamber. Now it roams afar, eschewing the untidy mess of tools, stone shards, anvils, blocks of metal and rock, scattered pins, nails, and pegs.
3. **Entr? Cave.** Two tunnels snake away from this cave. One leads through the old copper mines; the other provides access to the orc caverns.
4. **Old Copper Mine.** The tunnels are dry with an occasional sparkling vein of ore in their walls. The need to follow the richer lodes of copper created bizarre twists and unexpected slopes throughout their length. Generally the tunnels are 5' wide and shored up with triangular baulks of timber. Some of the baulks are cracked and the roof sags, but there is little chance of collapse.
5. **Face-workings.** The areas where the ore was actually mined are rough and littered with rubble. They have not been expanded by the current residents since the rock structure is unsound. A few discarded tools remain from past activity, but there is little chance of encountering anyone.
6. **Secret Door.**
7. **Chamber of the Crystal.** The twin stones that animate the Angdraug were found gripped in the stalactites fringing the vaulted ceiling of this chamber. Water has ceased to drip over the limestone formations, preventing their further growth.
8. **Passageway.** The Orc caverns open onto this more regular tunnel.
9. **Female Pens.** Two groups of females occupy these crowded caves: those reserved for the Shiruk, and the Fha-Korlash and those in the process of breeding. A number of the female Scara-hai have gone as camp followers with the warriors launching the attack on Condor's fortresses. The female live in squalid, filthy conditions with little light and no possessions.
10. **Imp Pen.** This large cave echoes with the squeals and raucous shouts of young Scara-hai. Once suckled by their natural mothers, they are supervised here by three callous Orc crones. Many Scara-hai offspring are malformed or defective beyond even the latitudes acceptable to this evil race; the crones weed out these weaklings to ensure only the strongest take their place in the tribe.
11. **Empty Shiriik Caves.** These caverns have been cleared completely following the departure of the Scara-hai forces.
12. **ShirQk Cave.** Four senior ShirQks normally share this cave. Just two of them currently remain to supervise the females and imps (see #9 and #10.)
13. **ShirQk Cave.** The Scara-hai living quarters are rough-hewn caverns formed by enlarging the pre-existing mine cavities. Ten Junior Shiruks make their home in this cave, although only one is still in the complex — usually to be found in the guardroom of the tower. Heaps of filthy belongings roughly tied with sackings and ropes cover the floor. The bundles belong to the absent ShirQks and contain little of any value.
14. **Cavern Entrance.** Two Scara-hai guard the concealed iron door.
15. **Elite Bukra Caves.** The most skilled bukras dwell in these caves. Being the elite fighting units of the Scara-hai, they are a little tidier than others (although not cleaner; military efficiency never being confused with good sanitation). The caves are mostly vacant; just one bukra (two warriors and two scouts, all 2nd level) remains in the nearer cave. Each Orc has a personal bundle containing 15-25sp and 20-40bp.
16. **Storeroom.** Moldy foodstuffs clutter the cave floor.



5.4 THE TASK

The characters' task at Durthang depends partly upon their reasons for coming here (see 5.41 below). However, anyone coming here has the chance to frustrate one of the most evil schemes being hatched by Sauron through his myriad agents; Gaurhir's attack on the Gondorian watch on Mordor at Cirith Ungol and Minas Ithil. This can be accomplished through various routes: slaying Gaurhir's mortal form, destroying the green sister-stone linked to the Angdraug or simply bringing back information (swiftly) regarding the imminent attack so that the garrisons are better prepared to repel it. Slaying the Fha-Korlash would also be of benefit as his leadership and the presence of the tribal totem (the cleaver) are most important to the Scara-hai's morale in battle, and hence to their effectiveness. Since it is the Scara-hai through Gaurhir who are initiating the attack on Condor, uncertainty in their ranks would most certainly spread panic through the other Orcs and cause many desertions.

5.41 STARTING THE PLAYERS

This adventure may stand on its own or be used as a final follow up to the previous adventures described in this book. As an adventure on its own, the player characters could be sent by the authorities in Gondor to see what they can learn of the plans of the new Master of Durthang, of whose presence they have learned from some captured Orc. The characters will arrive in the nick of time to learn of Gaurhir's evil scheme and hopefully to put an end to it.

If the characters are simply following the trail from Barad Perras, perhaps still searching for missing captives, on the scent of more loot, or simply to make sure they have thoroughly eradicated all traces of evil influence, then they have the same chance to discover the plans for the attack, and act upon the information. The characters in this case will have as their starting point the end of the last adventure.

Another way to start the characters could be encountering Thanadirian, in the same way as outlined in section 4.41. Any other source of rumors concerning an evil master laired in a magical citadel high in the Ephel Duath could bring bounty-hunters and treasure-seekers to the trails on the slopes of Hallras.

5.42 AIDS

Assistance can be given to the player characters overtly or through hints and clues. Preliminary information regarding the Master of Durthang will be scarce and may depend on how and where the characters start; those being commissioned by an agent of Gondor's army might know a little more from interrogation of a captured Orc, for example, whereas rumors gleaned from tale-tellers in inns and markets might be conflicting and confusing in the extreme.

Having some NPCs along may also be useful to a party lacking certain skills. Thanadirian is the first option here, along with any of the pre-generated characters of section 2.0. Knowledge of how to dispose of the werewolf, once its nature is known, would also be most useful.

5.43 OBSTACLES

You as GM can make this adventure as tough or (relatively) easy as you wish. The number of Scara-hai remaining at Durthang can be increased and you could place sentries at the lower wall or the caves along the path up to the citadel (see section 5.32 notes), requiring the player characters to either dispose of or circumvent them. Once Gaurhir learns of the approach of characters, he will ensure that better defences are prepared where possible with the remaining "man'power. If it appears that the party is very powerful indeed, he may use his ability to shape-change to try and infiltrate the party in some guise, trapping them somewhere.

The tower itself is a very dangerous place with a semi-sentience and malevolent nature. More of its specific effects are described in section 5.52. The only other major opponent is time, if you wish to set a certain date for the Scara-hai-led attacks to start.



5.44 REWARDS

The rewards for overcoming Gaurhir and scuppering the Scara-hai will be handsome, and commensurate with the ability shown by the characters. The officials in Gondor may reward good-intentioned characters with money, a presentation (perhaps of a magical item) and maybe even a title. For others who undertook the adventure with a more mercenary attitude, the rewards might only encompass money and hearty thanks. There is a fair amount of treasure to be looted from the tower and the Orc caves, any of which the characters are welcome to keep.

5.5 ENCOUNTERS

5.51 ENCOUNTERS IN THE NORTHERN EPHEL DUATH

Once up in the shadowy and treacherous high lands of Mordor's northwest border, the characters will find travel slow and dangerous. A roll should be made on the encounter table once for every 2 miles travelled.

- A) Scara-hai. This encounter will typically be with one bukra of Scara-hai (for details see 3.25/26), on a patrol or swift march carrying messages. They will either avoid the party or attack as looks most opportune. If you want to make the encounter tougher, have two bukras or have the Scara-hai accompanied by a Karg-Kragor (see 4.23).
- B) Beasts. Any of the creatures listed might attack even a strong or numerous party. The number encountered is entirely up to you but essentially the encounter should not be much more than an annoyance; it should also be possible for a to avoid the encounter if they act sensibly and

NPCS IN GATES OF MORDOR

Name	Lvl	Hits	AT	DB	Sh	Gr	Melee OB	Missile OB	Mov/ Man	Notes
Gaurhir	10	175	No	50*	N	N	98qs		40	Demonic Werewolf Mage
ST90,AG94,C085,IG79.IT96,PR97,AP30.										
Fha-Korlash	6	86	CH	15/40	N/Y	L	102cv	68xb	5	Scara-hai Warrior
ST91.AG68.CO70.IG43.IT69.PR80.AP32.*Clawed Bracers.										

Abbreviations:

cv — cleaver

Ln — knife

ob — or-bukar. Orcish clawed mace

The Scara-hai are called the Orcs of the Green Claw, and this is the symbol their warriors bear on their breastplates. However, the name is also descriptive of their appearance when they assume wolf-form, since their eyes glow an iridescent green and their teeth, pelt and claws all take on a greenish hue. The process of transformation is relatively quick, taking only thirty seconds from the donning of the enchanted wolfskin. However, the enchanting takes an hour, and requires elaborate ritual procedures. Each Scara-hai has his own wolfskin with which he is initiated and although it can be replaced, the individual usually protects it with a ferocity second only to his own life - and sometimes even more. Once transformed, the wolf-form can be kept for up to 6 hours. During this time, the Scara-hai retains his intelligence (such as it is) but gains the benefits of the senses of a Warg and also its savage bite. The Scara-hai's hands grow into claws but these still have opposable thumbs and can be used to hold weapons (with -20 OB) or tools. Other benefits gained in the transformation include better morale (from their bloodlust) and more concussion hits. In wolf-form, the Scara-hai have a peculiar disability to a particular herb, Aconite (also called Wolf's Bane and Bell-flower in the common tongue. If ingested or introduced through a wound, the Scara-hai takes 1 hit per round, and every five rounds must make a 9th level RR against agonizing death. While in wolf-form they can smell the herb at up to 50 paces and will avoid it.

The Scara-hai are organized on a tribal basis similar to other Orcs. The females and young are kept separate and in servility. Only the strongest of the males get the chance to breed. Sometimes, it is said, Gaurhir actually breeds Wargs with female Scara-hai to strengthen the vulpine nature of the tribe. The tribe is led by the Fha-Korlash (Or. Great Jaw) or chieftain. His symbols of office include a special cleaver and arm bracers. He has two lieutenants or *Karg-Kragurs* (Or. Tearing Fang), taken from the strongest scout-trained members of the tribe. Their totems are enchanted wolfsteeth necklaces. The rest of the tribe is organised in 5-orc *bukras* (Or. "Claw"), each consisting of two warriors and two scouts, led by a *Shirtik* (Or: Leaper). The ShirDks use a special weapon, a clawed mace called an or-bukar. Other attributes of these Scara-hai are given in the NPC sections of the adventures where they first appear.

7.0 TABLES

7.1 ENCOUNTERS IN THE NORTHERN EPHEL DUATH

Encounter Code	CIRITH HELKOND	IMLAD Approaches	LECHIL Plateau
A) Scara-hai	01-05	01-02	—
B) Fell Beast	—	—	01-02
Flies/Mordor	—	—	03-04
Goat, Wild	06-11	03-04	—
Spider,Giant	12-14	05-11	05-14
C) Flames	—	12	15-29
Fog	15-18	13-20	30-31
Smoke	19-20	21-24	32-39
D) Fall	21-23	25-29	40-42
Lost	—	30-31	43-52
Spikes	—	—	53-60
E) Nothing	24-00	32-00	61-00

ENCOUNTERS IN THE CITADEL OF DURTHANG

Encounter Code	CAVERNS	TOWER
A) Guards	01-04	—
Messengers	05-06	01-02
Servants	07-12	—
B) Disorientation	13-14	03-08
Fall	15-18	09-20
Ghost	—	21-32
Heat	19-20	33-44
C) Load	21-27	—
D) Special	28-29	45-48
E) No encounter	30-00	49-00

7.2 BEASTS OF NORTHERN ITHILIEN AND EPHEL DUATH

Type	Level	Size	Speed	Hits	AT	DB	Prim) OB	Secy OB	Notes
Corpse Candle	5	M	F/-	100	No	30			Attacks with Trance spell, (special)
Flier of Mordor	1	T	VF/F	2	No	35	15Tbi		1-100 appear
Kraken	15	M	MF	150	No	50	75MGrx3	-	Multiple attacks
Spider, Giant	5	M	MD	50	RL	25	65LSt*	55MBi	*Poisonous
Warg	t	M	F/MF	+50%t	SL	45	90Lbi	We	(scara-hai wolf-form)
Warhorre	5	L	F/F	160	SL	30	70MTS	30MBa	Baltab's mare, trained
Wild Boar	3	M	F/MF	120	No	30	40LHo	30MBa	Vicious if cornered
Mild Goat	2	M	F/F	60	SL	45	40MHo	60SBa	Guard territory

7.3 HERBS IN NORTH ITHILIEN

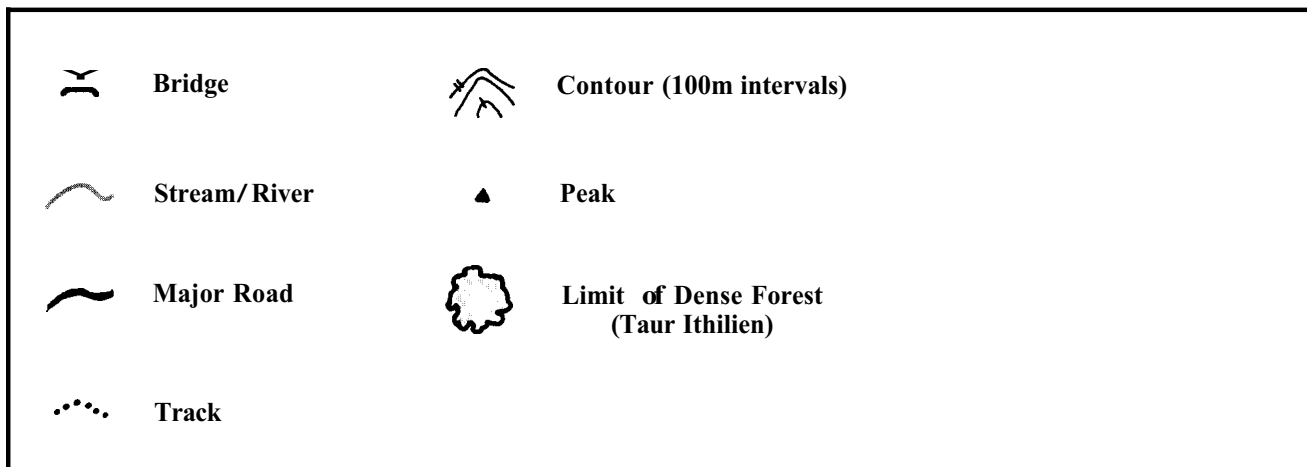
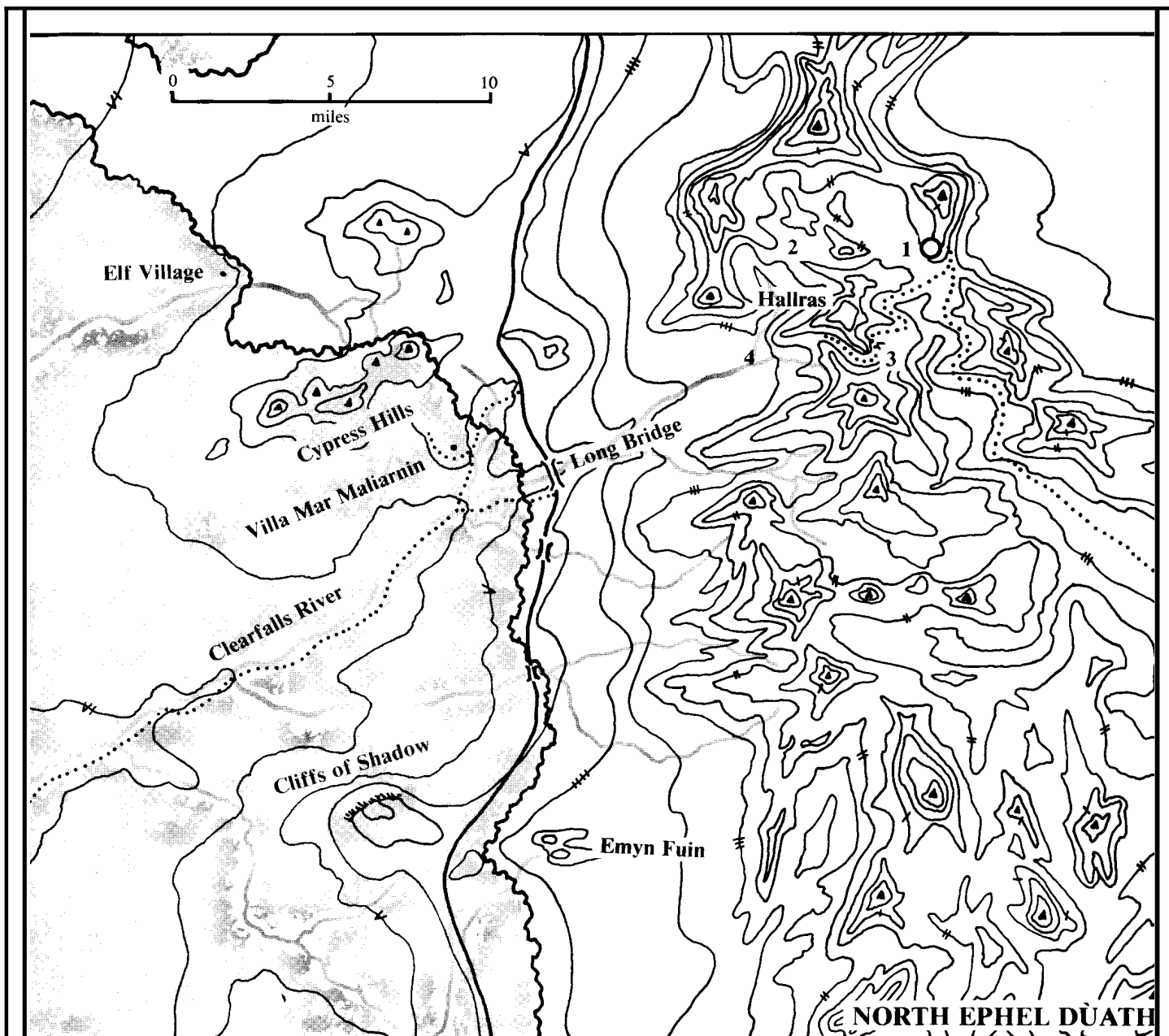
NAME	FREQ	FORM	NOTES
Aloe	EH	salve	x2 healing rate for burns/cuts
Arlan, Garden		poul.	Heals 4-9 hits
Arlan, Wild	E	poul.	Heals 1-6 hits
Arpsusar	H	stem	Mends muscle damage
Athelas	EH	inhale	Universal healant
Attanar	VH	poul.	Cures fever
Bright Blue Eyes	EH	tea	Enhances vision (x3) for 3 hours
Carefree Mustard	E	plas.	Heals all hits, 1hr immobile
Chap-Beech nuts	H	eat	1 day's nutrition
Elben's Basket	VH	soup	Heart stimulant, x2 speed for 1r
Furry Oak acorn	L	eat	1 day's nutrition
Grapeleaf Magnolia	VH	nectar	Nutritious, intoxicating, dreams
Kelventarb	M	rub	Heals burns and 1-10 heat hits
Rewk	L	chew	Heals 2-20 hits
Sarah-Pokes-Her-Head	R	root	3 weeks' nutrition
Splayfoot Goodwort	M	drink	Instills confidence, +25 morale
Sulimquelote	M	rub	Produces fragrant scent 1-4 hrs
Suranre	L	inhale	1r. stun relief
Thurl	E	drink	Heals 1-4 hits
Yaran	E	inhale	1hr acute smell and taste

HERBALISM AT MAR MALIARNIN

PHODUCT	SIZE	VALUE	INGREDIENTS
Mirlothnen (Scented Water)			
Cirelnen (Lavender water)	1oz	3sp	Oil of Lavender
Hirvia (Evening water)	107	4sp	Rose, Cloves, Bay leaves
Ithilnen (Ithilien water)	1oz	2sp	Mint, Rosemary, Rose
Belmirnen (Perfume)			
Caryopha	1oz	6gp	Carnation
Hwestene	1oz	3gp	Lily-of-the-valley
Lathlasse	1oz	12gp	Vanilla, Cedar, Cinnamon
Myranis	1oz	2gp	Balsam, Nutmeg
Myrista	1oz	4gp	Nutmeg
Ngaelen	1oz	8gp	Jasmine
Olvardil	1oz	28gp	Rose, Gardenia, Jasmine, Orange
Uinia	1oz	4gp	Oakmoss
Fladuciel (Oil & Soap)			
Findirciel (Hair oil)	1oz	12sp	Sage, Black Walnut (darkens hair)
Finthien (Hair cleanser)	4oz	15sp	Chamomile, Verbena, Rosemary
Fumell (Body oil)	1oz	10gp	Poppy essence
Meluinzil (Rose soap)	3oz	5SP	Rose petals
Yrncielin (Bath oil)	4oz	2gp	Pine, Sandalwood
Uwing (Ale)			
Dandelion Beer	lgal	16cp	Dandelion root, Ginger, Lemon, Sugar
Ginnas [Ad: dark beer]	1qt	1.5bp	Nettle, Hops, Burdock, Sugar
Moon's Ale	lgal	8cp	Hops, Barley
Sage Ale	lgal	12cp	Hops Sage leaves, Barley, Wheat
Iarnin (Wine)			
Culaisson	1pt	1sp-2ogp	added Bramble tips and Rose petals, price depends on vintage
Maliarnin, red	1qt	12cp	includes Grape skins
Maliarnin, white	1qt	15cp	slightly effervescent
Rimaaur-iarnin	1qt	32cp	Elderflowers
Firirnin (IS: Water-of-Life) Liquor or Cordial)			
Brosiarnin wood wine	.5pt	10cp	Pine extracts, with other wood oils
Culdnor golden spirit	.5pt	16cp	Ginger, Orange, spirit
Dolcrist clear cordial	.25pt	2bp	Cumin and Caraway seeds, very strong (S: Head-splitter)
Mead	1Pt	18cp	Rosemary, Cinnamon, Mace, Nutmeg, Honey Cloves, Ginger added to wine
Mircalen (green jewel)	.5pt	25cp	Mint. Anise

PROPER NAMES OF PLANTS AND HERBS

autumn lady's tresses	iavas finiril	ilex (holly)	ereg
beech	neldor	ivy, running	nellam
birch, silver	brethil	jasmine	ngaelen
birch, dwarf silver	perbrethil	love-in-a-mist	melhith
bracken	cadairian [pl]	nutmeg	myrista
carnation	caryopha	oakmoss	uinia
cedar	cuewhn	orchid	isceloth
chicory	inty bath	orchid, three-toothed	nelcarisce
cypress	tharn	Poppy	fumella
elder	rimaurlos	pine (fir)	thfi
honeysuckle	Rh: milithrag	rose	melui



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ISBN 0-915795-81-7

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